

3 THE *Pam 77*
Divine Institution
OF *K*
CONFIRMATION,
AND THE *4371e4*
HONOUR due to it. 9

Very plainly shewing
What CONFIRMATION was in the Days of the
APOSTLES.

T H A T

The Same, notwithstanding the ceasing of miraculous GIFTS, is Ordain'd of GOD for the Means of a plenteous Increase of Grace to all Christians.

A N D

What Preparation and Reverence it requires, both of Those who are to be Confirm'd, and of PARENTS, MASTERS, MINISTERS, &c.

A L S O

The deplorable Decay of True CHRISTIANITY through the Contempt of CONFIRMATION.

By a Divine of the Church of ENGLAND.

L O N D O N: Printed for J. Bettenham, at the
Crown in Peter-Noster-Row. 1718.

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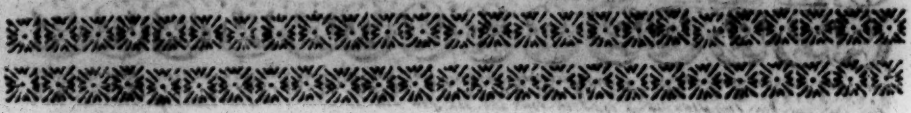
By a Divine of the Church of ENGLAND.

L O N D O N : Printed for J. Barnard, at the
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TO THE
READER.

IF thou seekest the Truth with the Wisdom of Resolution to obey it, I hope thou wilt herein find what thou desirest: and to God alone give the Praise. But if thou art otherwise minded, I do not pretend to please thee with Wisdom of Words. Let me intreat thee to consider seriously what thou readest: for they are Matters of the greatest Importance. I wish they were duly handled with a better Pen. I pray God give thee understanding, and Confession of the Truth in all things.





A Prayer.

O GOD, the King of Glory, who hast exalted thine only Son *Jesus Christ* unto thy Kingdom in Heaven; and by him hast promised unto thy faithful People another Comforter to abide with them for ever; We most humbly beseech Thee to leave us not in our comfortless Contempt of the Means whereby Thou dost make us Partakers of so great a Mercy. But, by our honourable Use of the Means Thou hast Ordained, grant to us the most Comfortable Aid of Thy Holy Spirit; that we may, as Thy Gospel requires, abound in all Heavenly Vertues, more and more, until Thou dost exalt us unto the same Place whither our Saviour is gone before; who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, World without End.
Amen.



The F I R S T Part.

*What Confirmation was in the Days of
the Apostles.*

C H A P. I.

*The Occasion of this Discourse. The Division of it. A
brief Account of the Apostolick Confirmation, and of
its being ordained of God.*



ALTHO' nothing is more evident in the Holy Scriptures, than that Confirmation is the ordinary Means, whereby God gives to all Christians to the End of the World, their Share of that Gift of the Holy Ghost, which was given to the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost: Yet this the means of so inestimable a Grace, a Grace reserv'd for the Honour of Christ's Kingdom †, ever since the Fall of Mankind, is lightly esteem'd; and either wholly neglected and despis'd, as an indifferent thing ordain'd only by Man; or us'd in such manner, as rather grieves the Holy Spirit, than obtains any Benefit from him.

It shall therefore be the Business of this Discourse, with God's Assistance, to endeavour to vindicate the High and Holy Dignity of this Ordinance, from the mean Opinion and Contempt that are cast upon it; by shewing,

† John 7. 39.

See Chap. IV. of this Part.

First, What it was in the Days of the Apostles.

Secondly, That the Same is ordain'd of God to continue to the End of the World ; and

Thirdly, What is the Honour due to it;

What it was in the Time of the Apostles, is shew'd, *Acts* VIII. 14, &c. ' When the Apostles which were at *Jerusalem*, ' heard that *Samaria* had receiv'd the Word of God, they ' sent unto them *Peter* and *John* ; Who when they were ' come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the ' Holy Ghost. (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them ; ' only they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus.) ' Then laid they their Hands on them, and they receiv'd ' the Holy Ghost. And *Chap.* XIX. 5, 6. we are told that *St. Paul* (who receiv'd both his Apostolical Commission, and his Instruction in the Gospel, not from the other Apostles, but immediately from Christ himself, *Gal.* I. 12, 16, 17.) laid his Hands on some *Ephesians*, whom he had before baptized ; and that, *when he had laid his Hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them.* Of this, and of the like, he minds them and the rest of the *Ephesians*, *Ephes.* I. 13. saying, *In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise.*

So this was the ordinary settled way with all the Apostles. The Twelve were confirm'd by the Coming of the Holy Ghost upon them on the Day of Pentecost. The first Converts were confirm'd by the Prayer of the Apostles, without laying on of Hands, themselves also praying with the Apostles, *Acts* IV. 31 *. And, no doubt, the Persons confirm'd always pray'd with those that confirm'd them.

The Case of *St. Paul*, who seems to have receiv'd the Grace of Confirmation before he was baptiz'd, only by *Ananias* his putting his Hands on him, and telling him his Message from Christ, *Acts* IX. 17 ; and the Case of *Cornelius* and his Company, who plainly receiv'd the same Grace before Baptism, *Chap.* X. 44. only by their Faith in the Word spoken by *Peter*, *Chap.* XV. 9. Those were extraordinary Cases, and cannot concern us.

Of both extraordinary Cases, and of the ordinary Confirmation of the *Corinthians*, the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor.* XII. 13. (as shall more plainly appear *Part.* III. *Chap.* 1.) in these Words, ' By one Spirit we are all baptiz'd into one Body,

* Then was fulfilled to them the Promise, *Chap.* II. 38, 39;

* whether

Chap. 1. *The Apostolick Confirmation.*

3

‘ whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or
‘ free ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
And of the same he speaks, 2 Cor. I. 21, 22. ‘Ο βεβαιῶν,
‘ Now he which confirmeth us with you in Christ, and hath
‘ anointed us, is God ; who hath also sealed us, and given
‘ the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts.

We are to follow the ordinary settled Way, by the Prayer
and Laying on of the Hands of the Apostles, and those to
whom the Apostles gave their Power to confirm. If it be
objected against this being the ordinary settled Way, that
it is not oftner spoken of in the Scripture ; that is no reason
of Doubt. For in three of the Gospels there is no men-
tion of Christ’s baptizing any ; and it is but once spoken
of by St. *John*. Yet there is no doubt that he caused his
Disciples to baptize all that came to him. So there is no
doubt that the Laying on of Hands, now spoken of, was
the ordinary settled way of Confirmation.

And this was the *Laying on of Hands*, Heb. VI. 2. which
is one of the first * Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, and a
part of the Foundation, next to the Doctrine of Baptism ;
and cannot but be meant of Confirmation. For that was
the great general part of the Foundation next to Baptism.
And if you read the Six first Verses, you may find the ex-
press Meaning of this Laying on of Hands ; that the Au-
thor of the Epistle refuses to lay again the Foundation of
Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God ;
of the Doctrine of Baptism, and of Laying on of Hands,
and of Resurrection of the Dead, and of eternal Judge-
ment ; because, it is impossible for those who were once
enlighten’d (by receiving the Faith) and have tasted of
the Heavenly Gift (by Baptism, *John* IV. 1, 10.) and
were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost (by Laying on
of Hands) and have tasted the good Promises of the Word
of God, and the Powers of the World to come (by the
hope of the Resurrection of the Dead, and of eternal Judge-
ment, *Matt.* XXII. 29. *Eph.* I. 18, 19, 20. *Acts* XXIV. 15.)
if they shall fall away, to renew them again to Repentance.

No other Laying on of Hands can reasonably be thought
to be there meant ; that of Ordination was no part of the
first Principles to be taught to Babes, Chap. V. 12, 13. and
was built upon the Foundation of Confirmation, *Acts* VI. 3.
As for Laying on of Hands in Absolution, altho’ it was

us'd in the Primitive Church, yet it is not found (only by some thought to be) in the New Testament. *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man*, 1 Tim. V. 22. after Directions in the Verses before concerning *Elders that rule well*, and an *Accusation against an Elder*, and *them* (particularly Elders) *that sin notoriously*, ought in all reason to be understood of Ordination, well known by Laying on of Hands, in both these Epistles, and in other places; and not of Absolution, which is no where known in the Scripture to be given with this Ceremony. So Heb. VI. 2. *Laying on of Hands* being one of the *first Principles of the Foundation*, and the being *made Partakers of the Holy Ghost*, being in the following Verse reckon'd among the same Principles, that *Laying on of Hands* ought in all reason to be understood of *Confirmation*, well known, Acts VIII. and Chap. XIX. to be administer'd by *Laying on of Hands*; and not of *Absolution* no where known in the Scripture to be given thereby. Besides, in Baptism is the Absolution of the Foundation. Other Absolution is for healing accidental Breaches; as the Lord's Supper is for preserving and strengthening the Building. Other Laying on of Hands need not here be mention'd.

Therefore the Laying on of Hands, which is a part of the Foundation, is without doubt Confirmation. And being a part of the Foundation, it is certainly ordain'd of God. He alone gives the Graces of his Holy Spirit. He alone therefore ordain'd the Means whereby they are given; whereby also they were Visibly and Miraculously given. His giving by that means Visible and Miraculous Graces, was an abundant Declaration of his Will to have that Means us'd.

CHAP. II.

Confirmation more distinctly consider'd. The Form or Manner of it.

FOR the more distinct understanding what this Ordinance of God was in the Time of the Apostles, there is to be consider'd,

1. The Form or Manner of it,
2. The Grace given thereby.

3. The

3. The End for which the Grace was given ; and,
4. Who were to be Confirm'd.

The Form or Manner of it is in the fore-cited relation out of *Acts VIII.* thus, The Apostles '*Peter and John* 'prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Then laid they their Hands on them.

The Apostles, or those to whom the Apostles gave their Power, *Tit. I. 5.* prayed for them that were to be confirm'd, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Then they laid their Hands on them. This was done to the Samaritans by two Apostles. And the same was done to the Disciples at *Ephesus* by one Apostle. It is probable that *Peter and John* did not only pray together for the Congregation, but also jointly laid their Hands on every one, as most agreeable to Christ's Promise, when two or three are gathered together in his Name, and to their own *Zeal.*

After they had prayed for the Congregation, that they might receive the Holy Ghost, then laid they their Hands on them. What is meant by their laying their Hands on them, is shew'd, *Matt. XIX. 13, 15.* 'There were brought unto him little Children, that he should put his Hands on them and pray — And he laid his Hands on them, *Mark X. 13, 16.* it is, 'They brought young Children to him, that he should touch them. — He put his Hands upon them, and blessed them. So by Christ's touching the Children, and by his laying his Hands on them, is meant his blessing them, or praying for them. The same therefore is meant by the Apostles laying on their Hands. After they had prayed for the whole Congregation together, then they blessed or pray'd for every one severally. The reason why laying on of Hands signifies praying for, or blessing, is because it was the accusom'd natural Ceremony, or rather natural Motion of the Body, in blessing or praying for particular Persons ; as lifting up the Hands was in other Prayer, *1 Tim. II. 8.*

C H A P. III.

The Grace given by Confirmation:

AS to the Grace given by the Prayer and Blessing of the Apostles, or of those to whom the Apostles gave Power to Confirm: It is said of the *Samaritans*, *And they receiv'd the Holy Ghost*; and of the *Ephesian Disciples*, *The Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with Tongues, and prophesied*. They did not all speak with Tongues, on whom the Apostles laid their Hands, *1 Cor. XII. 10, 30*. But that and divers other Gifts were scatter'd among them, *vers. 8, &c.* 'To one is given by the Spirit, the Word of Wisdom; 'to another the Word of Knowledge by the same Spirit; 'to another the Gift of Healing, &c. But to every one that was a true Believer, was given a bounteous Measure of the Grace promis'd by Christ to all. *John VII. 37, &c.* 'Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him 'come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the 'Scripture hath said, out of his Belly shall flow rivers of 'living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they 'that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost 'was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. This was the Gift which all receiv'd in Confirmation; and was no other than a plentiful Increase of the Grace before receiv'd in Baptism. For *Chap. 4.* of the same Gospel, when Jesus made and baptized more Disciples than John, *v. 1.* he says, *v. 10.* to a Woman of *Samaria*, 'If thou knewest the 'Gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to 'drink; thou wouldst have askt of him, and he would have 'given thee living water. So in Baptism he gave living Water: In Confirmation after he was glorified, he gave more of the same Living Water flowing into divers Streams. And they were Streams of *Water springing up into everlasting life*, *v. 14.*

That there might be Knowledge sufficient for this Grace, *Chap. XIV. 26.* he says to his Disciples, 'But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send 'in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all 'things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto 'you'. Thus he promis'd that the Holy Ghost, to be given after

after his Ascension, should teach them and all Christians to understand, and help them to remember all things of his Word.

That their Belief of the same might be fully confirm'd, *Acts V. 30, &c.* St. Peter tells the Jews, that 'the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him, is witness that God raised up Jesus, and hath exalted him with his Right Hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to *Israel*, and forgiveness of Sins'. And *1 John II. 20.* he says, 'Ye have an Unction from the Holy one, and ye know all things: and *vers. 27.* The anointing which ye have receiv'd of him, abideth in you; and you need not that any man teach you: But as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie'. The *Unction or Anointing* was the Grace of the Holy Ghost given in Confirmation, *1 Cor. I. 21, 22.* It cannot be meant that he taught them all things without the teaching of the Apostles, and other Ministers of Christ; but that he gave them infallible Assurance of the Truth of the whole Gospel preach'd by the Apostles; so that they needed not any further Proof of it from Man. And this he did not only by outward Miracles, but by the better inward Miracles of healing the Blindness and Lameness, and Sickness of the Soul; by purging with his spiritual Fire what he left unpurg'd by the Baptism of Water, and by strengthening their Reason to apprehend the Proofs of the Truth.

That they might have Courage to profess and teach it, notwithstanding the Threatnings and Persecutions of the World; when the Rulers of the Jews began to threaten, then was the first Confirmation of the Believers; and upon that *they spake the word of God with boldness, Acts IV. 31.*

And that no Comfort might be wanting to them in their Persecutions or other Troubles, *John XIV. 15, 16.* our Saviour saies to his Disciples, *If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray to the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* So the Comforter to be given in Confirmation to all Christians, and to be further given in Ordination, *1 Tim. IV. 14.* was to supply the place of Christ on Earth, after his Ascension.

He was a Comforter in all his Gifts and Graces, but more particularly in giving them Courage in Persecutions, as is aforesaid; in sealing them for God's People, *2 Cor. I. 22.* in giving them *the earnest of their inheritance*; Chap. V. 5.

Eph. I. 13, 14. and so bearing witness with their spirit, that they were the children and heirs of God, Rom. VIII. 16, 17.

And this his sealing them, and giving them the Earnest, was not so much his giving them outward miraculous Gifts, *Luke X. 20* (for those were given to many that were never own'd by Christ, *Matt. VII. 22, 23.*) but his saying to true Believers, *Well done thou good and faithful Servant,* by his giving them a plenteous Increase of the Living Water of Sanctifying Grace; and again, praising their faithful Use of his Grace, by giving them further Increase more and more, *Matt. XIII. 12. John XV. 2.*

The Word *παρηγορητης* in the Original for Comforter, signifies also Exhorter, and Advocate. He was an Exhorter in teaching Christians to understand, and helping them to remember Christ's Word, as is aforesaid; and in giving to some the Gift of Prophecy, *1 Cor. XII. 10.* which was speaking unto Men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort, *Chap. XIV. 3.*

He was an Advocate for Christians with God, and with Men; with God, by helping them to pray as they ought, *Rom. VIII. 26*; and with Men, by teaching Christians what to say, when they were brought before Magistrates, *Luke XII. 12.*

Here, from what is aforesaid, is to be observ'd, that the Gift of the Holy Ghost to be given after Christ's Ascension to the Apostles, and in Confirmation to all Christians, was Sanctifying Grace, a rich Increase of the Water of everlasting Life before given in Baptism, flowing plenteously in all Christian Actions, *Eph. V. 9.* and to that end helping them to understand and remember Christ's Word; confirming their Belief of it; and giving them greater Courage to profess and teach it, notwithstanding all the Threatnings and Persecutions of the World; by these Graces sealing them for God's Children, and giving them the Earnest of their Inheritance: And that the miraculous Powers given with this sanctifying Gift, were only the Attendants of it, necessary for the turning both Jews and Heathens from the Religions they receiv'd from their Forefathers, unto the Truth of the Gospel.

And as, *1 Cor. XII.* it is plainly affirm'd that those Powers were given to some one, and to others another; so there is reason to believe that the greater part of Christians had none of them,

When

When the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles, and upon a few of the first Fruits of the Gentiles, as the Company of *Cornelius*, and about Twelve Disciples at *Ephesus*; then it is said that they spake with Tongues. But when great Multitudes receiv'd the Gift, as the Congregation of Believers, *Acts IV.* and the Samaritans, *Ch. VIII.* there is not one word of their speaking with Tongues, or of any other miraculous Power.

Of the Congregation of Believers, *Acts IV.* it is said, *vers. 31, 32.* 'And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with Boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul: Neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common'. So all that is affirm'd of their being fill'd with the Holy Ghost, is that they were Confirm'd in their Profession of the Gospel, and in their Unity and Charity which they were baptiz'd into. Of the Apostles only it is said, that *with great Power they gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus*. But there is no doubt but that some of the Congregation which were fill'd with the Holy Ghost, had miraculous Powers given them, to fit them for Offices in the Church, as *Stephen* and *Philip* the Deacons had; and that divers others had them, as many as God saw fit, for the abundant testifying the Truth and Excellency of the Gospel, as the Daughters of *Philip*, *Acts XXI. 9.*

Of the Samaritans, *Acts VIII.* it is said, *v. 18.* *When Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles hands, the Holy Ghost was given.* This he might see by hearing only some of them speak with Tongues. He might also see, without miraculous Effects, such a Change in the Countenance and Behaviour, as is the natural Effect of any one being made better and wiser than he was before.

Every true Believer was certainly sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, *Eph. I. 13.* And as many as God saw fit, had miraculous Powers given them. And no more is to be understood of Signs following them that believe, *Mark XVI. 17.*

C H A P. IV.

The End for which the Grace of Confirmation was given. The Necessity of it.

THE miraculous Part of this Grace was given for the testifying the Truth of the Gospel, *Mark XVI. 20.* which, without such Testimony, would not have been believ'd by either Jews or Gentiles. And when the Truth of the Gospel was sufficiently manifested to the World, then no more of that Part was given. And so it was but an Attendant for a time of the other part; which was certainly given to enable Christians to live up to the Gospel, *Eph. V. 9.* that, as Christ came to reform the World, and to raise the Law unto Perfection, so his Disciples might have Grace to do what he requir'd of them.

That he came to raise the Law unto Perfection, he teaches, *Matth. V.* And that his Disciples might accordingly have more Grace, they were in Baptism *born again of the Spirit, John III. 5.* and therein received *living water springing up into everlasting life, Ch. IV. 1, 10, 14.* But *Ch. VII. 37, &c.* it is plainly told, that the Living Water of the Spirit to satisfy fully the Believer's Thirst, and to flow out of his Belly into plentiful Streams of all Christian Actions, was not to be given till Jesus was glorified. And the History of the Acts of the Apostles shews, that in the ordinary settled way, it was given only in Confirmation by Laying on of Hands.

Until that Spirit was given, even the constant Attendants of Christ had not Grace sufficient, either to understand, or obey his Gospel. *John XIV. 26.* he says unto them, 'The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. And *Ch. XVI. 12, 13.* 'I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. How be it, when he the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth'. So, before that Spirit came upon them, they had not Grace to bear many things, even from Christ's own Mouth, nor to understand duly what he said to them. In which Understanding they were so dull, that altho he had divers times told them of his rising again from the Dead,

yet

yet they could not believe it, till they saw it, and not easily then. And it is much to be noted, that *Peter*, the most zealous of them, that was the most forward in a most earnest Resolution to dye with him, rather than deny him, *Mark XIV. 29, &c.* yet neither in his Baptism, nor in the Lord's Supper receiv'd the same Night, had he receiv'd Grace sufficient to go through with his good Resolution, to forbear denying his Lord so shamefully, and even with Cursing and Swearing. But he had not yet receiv'd that Grace of the Holy Ghost, which was to enable him to *speake the word of God with boldness*, *Acts IV. 13, 31.* And his most vehement Resolution before, and his bitter weeping after, plainly shew, that his Sin was a Sin of Infirmary.

And very great Sins of Infirmary are recorded in the Scripture of the best of Men, such as cannot be imputed to any thing, rather than the want of that Grace which was reserv'd for the Kingdom of Christ, and to be given in Confirmation. How great was the want of Faith in the Father of all Believers, in denying his Wife, and suffering her to be several times taken from him, out of fear where he saw no cause for it; and notwithstanding the Assurances God himself had given him of his Protection! What a upplanter was *Jacob* in getting the Birth right, and the blessing from his Brother, and in making haste to be rich! *Gen. XXX. 37.* *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, and a Type of Christ called the Son of *David*, of whom, *1 Kings XV. 5.* it is affirmed, that *he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him, all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite*: Yet besides that matter, he did these things: For the foolish Words of *Nabal*, he fully resolv'd to put to the sword his numerous innocent Family, and had actually done it, if he had not been stay'd in his way by the great Wisdom of *Abigail*. And that Revenge was no more than what was expected upon such an Occasion. *Sam. XXV. 17.* the Servant said to *Abigail*, *know and consider what thou wilt do: for evil is determined against thy master, and against all his household.* *David* so far forgot himself in numbring the People, without collecting the Offering appointed by the Law, *Exod. XXX. 12.* as by that Neglect to bring a Pestilence upon them. And by his Fondness he ruin'd his Son *Adonijah*, and probably others of his Children. Other great Crimes are recorded of these, whom the holy Scripture testifies to be righteous Men.

12 *The End and Necessity of Confirmation. Part I.*

Men. And the unnatural Sins of Polygamy, and Divorces for insufficient Causes, were tolerated by the Law, for the Hardness of their Hearts, that is, their not having Grace sufficient to forsake those Sins.

The reason why they were accounted righteous, that were guilty of so great Crimes, is, God knew what Grace he gave them; and he requir'd no more than he gave.

So from the Fall of mankind till the giving of the Holy Ghost in Confirmation, there was no due Reformation in the Church. And the End for which the Grace of Confirmation was given, was to enable Christians to live up to the Gospel, as became the Honour of Christ's Kingdom.

CHAP. V.

Who were to be Confirm'd. The Want of Confirmation not supplied by the Lord's Supper. The Confirmation of Hypocrites null.

IN the Promises of the Grace, Christ saies, *John VII. 37.* *If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, &c. Ch. XIV. 15, 16. If ye love me, keep my Commandments. And I will pray the Father, &c. And Acts II. 38. Peter saies to the Jews and Profelytes that belev'd his Word, Repent, and be Baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost.*

When he Grace was receiv'd (in the ordinary settled way) it is said of the Samaritans, *Acts VIII.* *They had received the word of God: they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* The same in effect is said of the Disciples at Ephesus, *Acts XIX.*

They therefore who were to be Confirm'd were those that did repent, and believe the Gospel, and were Baptized; and consequently were instructed in what they were to believe and do. The Case of *Cornelius* and his Company is consider'd *Ch. I.*

There is nothing to be found in the Scripture of Confirming Infants, altho' it is always practis'd by the Greek Church; nor of Confirming Children before they could understand the Duty of Christians, as has been done in *England*, and other Parts.

Then

There is indeed little doubt, but that in the Congregation of Believers, *Acts IV.* who are all said to be fill'd with the Holy Ghost, there were Infants in their Mothers or Nurses Arms *. But *they were all fill'd with the Holy Ghost*, is affirm'd only of those that had pray'd, not of such Children as had not Understanding to pray with them.

In the Confirmation of the *Samaritans* there is no more mention of excepting Infants, than there was in Baptizing them. They that were Baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, were Confirm'd. But this must be understood only of such Baptized Persons as were to be Confirm'd: As when, *Matth. XXVIII.* Christ saies, *Go and teach all nations, Baptizing them*; he means, Teach those that are capable of teaching; and Baptize those that are to be Baptized.

Whatever else may be said in this Case, it is to be answer'd, that there is express Authority in Scripture for Baptizing Infants, but none for Confirming them.

As for the Lord's Supper supplying the want of Confirmation, as some now think: They that believe Confirmation to be an Ordinance of Man, may think so. But that others also may not be in the same Errour, it is expedient for them to consider, that there is not so much as any thing of pretence for it to be found in the Scripture. But on the contrary, how much did the Apostles themselves, *Matth. XXVI. 31.* and even *Peter*, the most zealous of them, want the Grace of Confirmation, the same Night after their partaking of that holy Sacrament! And their first Converts, after their receiving that Sacrament, *Acts II. 42, 46.* did receive the Grace of Confirmation, by the Prayer of the Apostles and Congregation, *Ch. IV. 31.*

Altho' the Lord's Supper is a Means and Pledge of all the Benefits of Christ's Death; yet it is upon condition of our using all other means. It will not supply the want of Baptism, or of daily Prayer, or of continual Learning the Word. So it will not supply the want of Confirmation.

In the Lord's Supper we remember Christ's Death sealing the New Testament. And this can give us the Hope of receiving the Benefits of the New Testament, no otherwise than by our performing all that is required of us in the New Testament, for the obtaining of the same Benefits. It cannot give us now what is to be receiv'd at another

* *Jes I. 16.*

time, and by other Means; but only a Right to it, when the Means is us'd: And it does most strictly oblige us to use the same Means, as being requir'd in the New Testament seal'd by Christ's Blood.

Therefore all that can be said in this Case is, to those that are ready and desirous to be Confirm'd, the Lord's Supper seals the Assurance of their receiving the Promise of Confirmation, when they are Confirm'd.

If any thing ever supply'd the Want of Confirmation, it was Ordination. For therein, by the Prayer and Laying on of the Hands of the Apostles and Bishops, the Holy Ghost was and is given for the Work of the Ministry, 1 Tim. IV. 14. 2 Tim. I. 6, 7. part of which Work is an exemplary Life. And the Apostles and St. Paul receiv'd the Holy Ghost for their Confirmation, when they receiv'd him for their Ordination. But when the Apostles ordain'd others, Acts VI. 3. we read how for the Office of Deacons they requir'd such as had before receiv'd the Grace of Confirmation. And the Directions which St. Paul gives, 1 Tim. III. Tit. I. and Ch. II. for the Choice of Bishops or Elders, and Deacons, must suppose them to have been Confirm'd as well as Baptiz'd, both being of *the foundation of the doctrine of Christ*, Heb. VI. 2. Therefore, as in the ordinary settled way of Confirmation, the Grace thereof was built upon the Grace of Baptism: So the Grace receiv'd in the ordinary settled way of Ordination, was built upon the Grace of Confirmation, as in all reason it ought to be.

There is one other Question needful to be resolv'd, Whether Hypocrites, who were unworthily Confirm'd without any Benefit, might, upon their true Repentance, be Confirm'd again?

They indeed had Hands laid on them, with Prayer and Blessing: But they were not Confirm'd. And what was to be done to them, when they truly repented, is intimated in St. Paul's Question to the Disciples at Ephesus, Acts XIX. 2. *Have ye receiv'd the Holy Ghost since ye believed?*

Those Hypocrites therefore, when they truly repented, were to receive, by the Prayer and Laying on of the Hands of the Apostles or Bishops, what they had not receiv'd before.

C H A P. VI.

The Sum of the First Part.

IT has now been sufficiently shew'd, what Confirmation was in the Days of the Apostles ; That they who were instructed in the Knowledge of the Gospel, and did believe the same, and repent, and were Baptiz'd; they by the Prayer and Laying on of the Hands of one or more Apostles or Bishops, receiv'd a plenteous Increase of the Grace of the Holy Ghost that was given before in Baptism ; to enable them better to understand, and remember, and live according to Christ's Word ; and to confirm their Belief of it ; and to give them greater Boldness to profess it, notwithstanding the Threatnings and Persecutions of their Enemies ; to the end, that as Christ requires higher Degrees of Holiness than were before required, so his Disciples might have Grace to do as he expected from them. This Grace was the Seal of God's Children, and the Earnest of their Inheritance. And together with this Grace, there were given to Many miraculous Gifts, then necessary for the testifying the Truth of the Gospel, and to fit Men for holy Employments in the Church.



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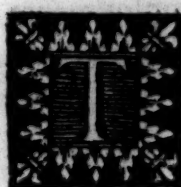


The SECOND Part.

That the same Confirmation that was in the Days of the Apostles, is ordain'd of God to continue to the End of the World.

CHAP. I.

The Design and Need of Confirmation never ceases.



HEY that allow not the Continuance of this holy Ordinance, alledg that the Apostolick Confirmation was only a personal Privilege, and to cease when miraculous Inspirations did not accompany it. But this their Saying is only a Pretence without Proof. It shall therefore be plainly proved, that the same Confirmation for the Substance of it, that was in the Days of the Apostles, is ordain'd of God to continue to the End of the World. The same that every Christian then receiv'd in the ordinary way, is ordain'd to continue for ever; altho' not the miraculous Attendant of it, which was given only to some, and was to continue no longer than the Occasion of it lasted.

If it were only for miraculous Gifts, then it should cease when they ceased; as well as the Anointing with Oil for the miraculous Cure of the Sick.

But the Design of it being for the Encrease of Sanctifying Grace, and for the Strengthening of Christians against the Threatnings and Persecutions of the World; this can-

Chap 2. Confirmation one of the Fundamentals. 17

not but continue as long as Baptized Christians need Increase of Grace, and of Strength against Temptations.

There is no mention in the Scripture, nor ground in Reason of the ceasing of this Ordinance. Christians do still need all the means of Grace as much as ever they did. Popish Persecutions are as fierce, and as cruel as those of the Heathen were. And they that will live Godly in Christ Jesus, wheresoever they live, must expect the ill Will and Persecutions of Worldly Men.

Therefore Christ's Promise, *Matth. XXVIII. 20.* to be with his Ministers *always even unto the end of the World; in their teaching Christians to observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded;* must be understood of his being with them in their teaching and administering Confirmation, as one of the things he has commanded (although after that Promise) when and howsoever he commanded it, and as one of the Means of Grace, whereby he enables us to perform all his Commandments.

CHAP. II.

Confirmation one of the first Fundamental Principles that continue for ever.

Laying on of Hands is *Heb. VI. 2.* one of the first (ch. V. 12.) Principles, and a part of the Foundation of the Doctrine of Christ; and plac'd with Baptism, in the same rank with Repentance and Faith on the one side, and Resurrection of the Dead and eternal Judgment on the other. † And therefore it is without doubt to continue to the end of the World; as well as those other Principles and Parts of the same Foundation.

They therefore who would have Confirmation to cease when miraculous Gifts ceas'd, may as well say the preaching of the Gospel, and Faith, and Baptism were also then to cease. For *Mark XVI. 15, &c.* Christ says to his Apostles, Preach the Gospel to every Creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: But he that believeth not shall be damned. And these Signs shall follow them that

† See part 1. ch. 1.

'believe; In my Name shall they cast our Devils, they shall speak with new Tongues, &c.

CHAP. III.

The Grace of Confirmation promis'd to all Christians to the end of the World; and declar'd in the Scripture to be given (in the Ordinary Way) only in Confirmation by Laying on of Hands.

THIS is another unanswerable Proof of the continuance of this Ordinance for ever.

That there is such a Promise, and that the Grace promised, is declar'd to be given (in the Ordinary Way) only in Confirmation by Laying on of Hands, is so plain in the New Testament, as that nothing can be more visible; how many soever there be, whose Eyes God has not open'd to see it.

For the Promise: 'When *John* Baptized with the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him which should come after him, *Acts* XIX. 4. and so Baptizing them in the Name of Christ: He promised that Christ should Baptize them with the Holy Ghost, *Matth.* III. 11.

And when Christ Baptized in his own Name, with the same Baptism, saying (as *John* did) *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, *Matth.* III. 2. *Ch.* IV. 17. and telling the People to believe on him, as *John* had forewarned them, he said *John* VII. 37, 38. 'If any Man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of Living Water. In the next Verse it is added, But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.

And *ch.* 14. speaking to his Disciples of his going to his Father's House, to prepare a Place for them, and his coming again to receive them, he says ver. 16. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* Which abiding for ever of another Comforter must be understood of all the time of his bodily absence from them, and is the chief meaning of his Promise

mise, Matth. XXVIII. 20. *Lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the World.*

And when after he was Glorified, his Apostles Baptized with the same Baptism in his Name, that he and John Baptized with (for Acts II. 38. 'Peter said, Repent, and be Baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ † for the remission of Sins) then Peter said to a great Congregation of both Jews and Proselytes (ver. 10.) And ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost. For the Promise is unto you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. The Promise is of the same Gift of the Holy Ghost, which the Apostles then receiv'd, call'd ver. 33. *the Promise of the Holy Ghost.* And of the same Christ said, 'If any Man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink, &c. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.

Now it is very plain that these Promises of the Holy Ghost, *which was to be given after Christ was glorified*, are made to all Christians that use the means, unto the end of the World.

For the Fulfilling of these Promises; it is plain they were not fulfilled in the Baptism of John, and of Christ. For the Grace promised was not to be given till after Christ was glorified. Yet all that were Baptized by them, were without doubt *born again of the Spirit*, John III. 5. *did drink of the living water*, ch. IV. 10. 14; by the Holy Spirit his working effectually, and increasing in them that Repentance and Faith, which in their Baptism they profess'd. The Apostles had also power to *heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out Devils*, Matth. X. 18. The Seventy likewise had Power to *heal the sick and cast out Devils*, Luke X. 19. 17. Others also had such power, ch. IX. 49. 50. But none of them had then the Comforter; who was not to come till Christ departed, John XVI. 7.

† Into the Discipline of Jesus Christ, with the Baptism that he commanded in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Also the Baptism of Christ and of John was not only in the Name of Christ, as is shew'd, but also in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For thereby the Baptized were given up to the Repentance and Faith commanded by the Father, and taught by the Holy Ghost in the mouth of Christ, Luke IV. 1. 14. 15. 18. and of John, ch. 15. 16. 17. and so be more fully taught by the Holy Ghost, after Christ's Ascension,

Nor were those promises fulfill'd in the Baptism of the Apostles: Wherein also was without doubt the new Birth of the Holy Spirit which appear'd by the fruits of the Spirit *Acts II. 42.* to the end. For as they Baptiz'd with the same Baptism that Christ and John Baptiz'd with; and promis'd again the same Gift of the Holy Ghost to those that they Baptiz'd, as it is just now shew'd: So that Gift was never given, except in extraordinary cases, † but in Confirmation after Baptism. Those very persons to whom St. Peter promis'd that Gift, receiv'd it some time after their Baptism, by a Prayer which must be suppos'd to be offer'd by the Apostles, but then the first time without Laying on of Hands. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, *Acts IV. 31.* as when the Apostles were fill'd, there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty Wind.

Chap. VIII. it is plainly affirm'd that the Holy Ghost was fallen upon none of the Samaritans that were Baptiz'd until they were Confirm'd by the Prayer and laying on of the hands of Peter and John, and that then they receiv'd the Holy Ghost.

And ch. XIX. it is affirm'd of the Ephesian Disciples Baptiz'd by Paul, that when (after Baptism) Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them. And so Prayer and Laying on of Hands was the Sett'd Ordinary Way with all the Apostles, and firmly Ratified by God's Visible giving his Holy Spirit thereby.

The reason why St. Paul Baptized those that had been Baptiz'd with the Baptism of John, was because by them having never heard of the Holy Ghost (*Matth. III. 11.* and probably by some further account of their Baptism, he knew that they had not the true Baptism of John*. Otherwise John's Baptism being in the Name of Christ, and the very same with the Baptism of Christ, in his own Name as is before shew'd, he would not have Baptiz'd them again. They seem to be Confirm'd immediately after their Baptism: As the Holy Ghost descended on Christ, not in

† The true Baptism of John ended with his Death, Mark I. 14. For his Ministry was to proclaim the Coming of Christ, and to shew him to the People, John. And as the Apostles long after both the Death of John and Christ's giving the power of Baptizing to his Apostles, preached John's Baptism: So he, or somebody else might Baptize these Disciples with the same Baptism.

Baptism, but when he was praying after he was Baptiz'd
Luke III. 21.

And now what can be plainer in the Holy Scripture, than both the Promise of a special bounteous Increase of the Grace of the Holy Spirit, to all Christians to the end of the World, and also the Fulfilling of the same Promise, in the Ordinary way, only in Confirmation with Laying on of Hands?

Therefore it is, that *Laying on of hands* is *Heb. VI. 2.* one of the *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ next to Baptism.* Which Laying on of hands has also, in the beginning of this Discourse, been fully shew'd to be meant of Confirmation.

So the Holy Scriptures teach, as fully, and as plainly as can be desir'd, That Confirmation by the Prayer and Laying on of the Hands of the Apostles and their Successors, is Ordain'd to continue unto the end of the World.

There are subtil ways of wresting the Sense of the plainest Words, but we must learn to distinguish between such Subtilties and true Reasonings.

What is to be said of the Opinion of those who think the want of Confirmation is supplied by the Lord's Supper, is before shew'd, *Part I. ch. V.*

CHAP. IV.

Confirmation Commanded.

It may be after all thou wilt say, Where is Confirmation commanded in the Scripture? It is commanded *Heb. VI. 2.* being made one of the first (ch. V. 12.) *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ.* It is also commanded *Acts VIII.* and *ch. 19.* by being made the only ordinary Means of our receiving an Inestimable Grace, as is shew'd in the foregoing Chapter. And it must be a great Sin of Unthankfulness, and despising the Grace of God, to neglect the means whereby he gives

But wilt thou be such a Fool, as to lose an Inestimable treasure, only for want of a reverent coming for it?

C H A P. V.

The Doctrine of the Primitive Church concerning Confirmation.

Hitherto, that the true light of the Scripture may the better appear, all Quotations out of other Books have been purposely avoided. To know the Doctrine of the Primitive Church concerning any Truth, we need not expect to find it in the Writings of every Father, or of every Age. There is no mention of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the Gospel of St. John, nor in his other Writings. And none of the Holy Writers besides St. Matthew, say any thing of *Baptizing in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. Therefore I shall pass by the Testimonies of the Age next the Apostles: because, although they are not to be rejected, yet are liable to exception or doubt. The Christians of that Age might very well be contented with what they were plainly taught in the Writings of the Apostles themselves, frequently seeing the miraculous effects of Confirmation, which were then continu'd.

Here shall be produc'd none but undoubted Testimonies Wherein, that the true Sense of the Fathers may appear, their Original Words shall be set with a Translation, as near as may be, word for word.

Tertullian, who liv'd in the second Century, and wrote in the beginning of the third, in his sixth Chapter of Baptism, says, 'Dehinc manus imponitur advocans & invitans Spiritum Sanctum. After Baptism the hand is laid on, to call and invite the Holy Ghost. And in his eighth Chapter of the Flesh, he says, 'Caro manus impositione adumbratur ut anima Spiritu illuminetur. The Flesh is shadowed by the laying on of the hand, that the Soul may be illuminated by the Spirit.

Cornelius Bishop of Rome, about the middle of the third Century, wrote the Epistle, part of which is in the sixth Book, ch 43 of *Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History*. In which Epistle, concerning *Novatus*, who was Baptized in his Sickne

Chap. 5. Church concerning Confirmation. 23

are these words, *Οὐ μὲν ἔδὲ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι ἐτυχε διαφυγὼν τὴν νόσον, ἃν χερὶ μεταλαμβάνον κατὰ τὸν τῆς ἐκκλησίας κανόνα: τὸ τε σφραγισθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου. τίτε δὲ μὴ τυχεῖν, πῶς ἂν τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι ἐτυχε;* And truly after he escaped the Disease, he did not obtain that which remained for him to receive according to the Canon of the Church, the Sealing also by the Bishop; and having not obtained that, how did he obtain the Holy Ghost?

St. Cyprian, about the same time, wrote in his Epistle to Jubatian, *Quod deerat, id a Petro & Johanne factum est, ut oratione pro eis habita, & manu imposita, invocaretur, & infunderetur super eos Spiritus Sanctus. Quod nunc quoque apud nos geritur, ut qui in Ecclesia Baptizantur, præpositis Ecclesiæ offerantur, & per nostram orationem, ac manus impositionem Spiritum Sanctum consequantur.* That which was wanting, was done by Peter and John, that by Prayer for them, and laying on the hand, the Holy Ghost might be called, and pour'd upon them. Which thing is also now done among us, that they which are Baptiz'd in the Church, may be brought to the Governours of the Church, and by our Prayer and laying on of the hand, obtain the Holy Ghost.

The Council of *Arelate* or *Orleance* about the year 326, Canon 8, decreed concerning rebaptizing the Arians, thus, *Si ad Ecclesiam aliqui de hac hæresi venerint, interrogent eos nostræ fidei Sacerdotes Symbolum. Et si perviderint in Patre, & Filio, & Spiritu Sancto eos Baptizatos, manus eis tantum imponatur ut accipiant Spiritum Sanctum.* If any shall come to the Church from this heresie, let the Priests ask them the Creed of our Faith. And if they shall find them to be Baptiz'd in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, let only the hand be laid upon them, that they may receive the Holy Ghost.

The Council of *Laodicea* in the year 367, Canon 48, decreed thus, *Δεῖ τὸς βαπτισμένους μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα χεῖρας χεῖσματι ἐπεχρῆναι, καὶ μετόχους εἶναι τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ.* The Baptized must after Baptism be anointed with the heavenly anointing, and be Partakers of the Kingdom of God. The words anointed and anointing are Scripture words to signifie the Grace of Confirmation, 2 Cor. I. 21. 1 John II. 27.

St. Ambrose, who was Bishop of *Millain* in the year 373, in his Comment on *Heb. VI.* writes, *Impositionis manuum per quam Spiritus Sanctus accipi posse creditur: Quod post*

Baptismum, ad Confirmationem unitatis in Ecclesia, à Christi pontificibus fieri solet. 'Of laying on of hands, by which it is believed the Holy Spirit may be received: Which is wont to be done after Baptism by Christ's Bishops for the confirmation of unity in the Church.

And in his third Book of the Sacrament, *cb. II.* 'Post fontem superest ut perfectio fiat, quando ad invocationem Sacerdotis Spiritus Sanctus infunditur, spiritus sapientiæ & intellectus, Spiritus consilii atque virtutis, Spiritus cognitionis ac pietatis, Spiritus sancti timoris. 'After the Font it remains that Perfection be made, when at the Prayer of the Priest the Holy Spirit is pour'd in, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Virtue, the Spirit of Knowledge and Godliness, and the Spirit of Holy Fear.

By the Priest he means the Bishop, as appears by his saying the same is wont to be done by Christ's Bishops: As in the Old Testament the High Priest is usually call'd the Priest.

St. *Jerom*, who also liv'd in the same Age, in his Dialogue against the *Luciferians*, has these Words,

Luciferianus dicit, — 'An nefas etiam Ecclesiarum hunc esse morem, ut Baptizatis postea manus imponantur, & ita invocetur Spiritus Sanctus? Exigis ubi scriptum sit? In Actibus Apostolorum. Etiam si Scripturæ auctoritas non subesset, totius orbis in hanc partem consensus instar præcepti obtineret.

Orthodoxus dicit, 'Non quidem abnuo hanc esse Ecclesiarum consuetudinem, ut ad eos qui longe in minoribus urbibus per presbyteros & diaconos Baptizati sunt, Episcopus, ad invocationem Sancti Spiritus, manum impositurus excurrat.

'Quod si hoc loco quæris, quare in Ecclesia Baptizatus, nisi per manus Episcopi, non accipiat Spiritum Sanctum; quem nos asserimus in vero Baptismate tribui: Disce hanc observationem ex ea autoritate descendere, quod post Ascensum Domini Spiritus Sanctus ad Apostolos descendit. Et multis in locis idem factitatum reperimus, ad honorem potius Sacerdotii, quam ad legis necessitatem. Alioqui, si ad Episcopi tantum imprecationem Spiritus Sanctus defluit, lugendi sunt qui in vinculis, aut in castellis, aut in remotioribus locis per presbyteros & Diaconos Baptizati ante dormierunt, quam ab Episcopis inviserentur. Ecclesiæ salus in summi Sacerdotis dignitate pendet: Cui si non exors quæ-

dam

Chap. 5. Church concerning Confirmation. 25

dam, & ab omnibus eminens detur potestas, tot in Ecclesiis efficientur schismata, quot Sacerdotes. Inde venit, ut sine chrismate, & Episcopi iussione, neque Presbyter neque Diaconus jus habeat Baptizandi. Quod frequenter, si tamen necessitas cogit, scimus etiam licere laicis. Ut enim accipit quis, ita & dare potest: Nisi forte eunuchus à Philippo Diacono Baptizatus, sine Spiritu Sancto fuisse credendus est: De quo Scriptura ita loquitur, *Et descenderunt ambo in aquam, & Baptizavit eum Philippus: Et cum ascenderunt ab aqua, Spiritus sanctus venit in eunuchum.*

The Luciferian says,--- Dost thou not know that this is the manner of the Churches, that upon the Baptized hands are afterwards laid, and so the Holy Ghost is called in? Dost thou demand where is it written? In the Acts of the Apostles. And if there were not Authority of Scripture for it, the consent of the whole World in this matter would have the force of a Commandment.

The Orthodox says, 'I do not indeed deny this to be the Practice of the Churches, that to those who have been Baptiz'd far off in the lesser Cities by the Presbyters and Deacons, the Bishop goes forth to lay on his hand, for the calling upon them the Holy Ghost.—

But if you ask in this matter, why he that is Baptiz'd in the Church does not, but by the hands of the Bishop, receive the Holy Ghost, * whom we affirm to be given in true Baptism: † understand that this Observation comes from this Authority, that after the Ascension of our Lord, the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles. And in many places we find the same practis'd rather for the honour of the Priesthood, than for the necessities of the Law. Otherwise if the Holy Ghost floweth down only at the Prayer of the Bishop, they are to be lamented, who being Baptiz'd by the Presbyters and Deacons in bonds, or in Castles, or in far distant places, have slept before they could be visited by the Bishop. The good estate of the Church depends upon the Dignity of the high Priest: To whom if there be not given by all a certain singular and eminent Power, there will be made as many Schisms in the Church, as Priests. Thence it comes that, without the anointing and appointment of the Bishop, neither Presbyter nor Deacon has the right of Baptizing. Which, if so be that necessity compels, we know to be often

* For the Grace of Confirmation.

† For the New Birth.

allow'd even to Lay-men. For as any one receives, so he can also give: Unless perhaps the Eunuch Baptized by *Philip the Deacon*, must be believed to be without the Holy Ghost; of whom the Scripture thus speaks, *And they went down both into the water, and Philip Baptized him: And when they came up out of the water, the Holy Ghost came upon the Eunuch.*

It was needful to transcribe so much, that it may appear what *St. Jerom* means by, rather for the honour of the Priesthood, than for the Necessity of the Law. He cannot mean that Confirmation by the Bishop is not necessary: Which he affirms to come from the Authority of the Holy Ghost's descent upon the Apostles. And how from that Authority, but by our Saviour's promising that the Holy Ghost the Comforter shall abide in the Church for ever, and by his giving the same Comforter, only by the Prayer and Laying on of the hands of his Apostles, and their Successors the Bishops? His giving by that means only (in the ordinary way) a special Comfortable increase of the Grace of the Holy Ghost given before in Baptism.

But *St. Jerom* means that in many places Christians believed the power of Laying on of hands in Confirmation to be given only to Bishops, and no other Ministers, not absolutely, but for the support of that their honour and dignity, on which the good estate of the Church depends: And that he did not believe the necessity of the Bishop's Laying on his hands was such, but that sick Christians in places far from him, and without hope of life till he could come to them, might receive by the Ministry of a Presbyter or a Deacon, such a Grace of the Holy Ghost, as was given by the Laying on of the hands of the Bishop: Like as the power of Baptizing is only in the Bishop, and by his Authority in Presbyters and Deacons, for the same honour and dignity of the Bishop: Yet *St. Jerom* knew that if necessity compell'd, it was frequently allow'd even to Lay-men. And so far concerning Confirmation, may be truth in his words spoken in anger in another place (*Ep. ad Evagr.*) 'Quid facit, excepta Ordinatione, Episcopus, quod Presbyter non facit?' 'What does a Bishop, except Ordination, which a Presbyter does not?'

As to the words *the Holy Ghost came upon the eunuch*, if they be the words of Scripture, it was an extraordinary case. He was Confirm'd after his Baptism by the immediate hand of God, as *Cornelius* and his company were before

Ch. 5 Church concerning Confirmation. 27

fore their Baptism. That a Deacon had no power to Confirm, appears by Philip's Confirming none of the Samaritans that were Baptiz'd by him.

But without doubt God hears either Presbyter or Deacon, or when a Minister cannot be had, any two or three met in Christ's Name, praying for a good Christian, that could not be Confirm'd by the Bishop, in these words of the Church, The more the outward Man decayeth, strengthen him, we beseech thee, so much the more continually with thy Grace and Holy Spirit in the inner Man. But it would be better for him, if he could be Confirm'd by the Bishop: As for one through necessity Baptiz'd by a Lay-man, it would be better to be Baptiz'd by a lawful Minister.

St. Chrysostom, who was not long after St. Jerom in his Comment Heb. VI. 2. writes, *Kai ἑνέειπεν χερσίν. Οὕτως ὁ Πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε, ἐνέειπεν αὐτοῖς τὸ Παῦλος τὰς χεῖρας, φησὶ.* And of laying on of hands. 'For so they received the Spirit, † when Paul laid his hands on them, saith he.

St. Augustine, who liv'd in the beginning of the fifth Century, in his third Book of Baptism against the Donatists, ch. XVI. writes, 'Neque enim temporalibus & sensibilibus miraculis attestantibus, per manus impositionem modo datur Spiritus Sanctus, sicut antea dabatur ad commendationem rudis fidei, & Ecclesiæ primordia dilatanda. Quis enim nunc hoc expectat, ut ii quibus manus ad accipiendum Spiritum Sanctum imponitur, repente incipiant linguis loqui? Sed invisibiliter & latenter intelligitur, per vinculum pacis, eorum cordibus Divina charitas inspirari, ut possint dicere. Quoniam charitas Dei Diffusa est in cordibus nostris, per Spiritum Sanctum qui datus est nobis.' 'For neither with temporal and sensible Miracles attesting it, is the Holy Ghost now given by the laying on of the hand, as he was given in former time, for the commendation of new Faith, and to enlarge the beginnings of the Church. For who doth now expect this, that those on whom the hand is laid for the receiving the Holy Ghost, should presently begin to speak with Tongues? But the Divine Love is understood to be secretly and invisibly inspir'd into their hearts, by the bond of Peace, that they can say, The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Theodoret, who liv'd in the same Century, in his Com-

28 *The Sum of the Primitive Doctrine* Part II.

ment on *Heb. VI. 2.* says, *Οἱ γὰρ παρὰ δυνάμει τῷ τέττον βδελ-
 γήδονοι δυσσομίαν καὶ καὶ αἰσχροῦ χρόνιοι ἀποστὰσι πρὸ Θεοῦ βαπ-
 τίσματι, καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς χειρὸς ὑποδέχονται τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ Πνεύ-
 ματος.* For they that have believed, abhorring their
 wicked odour, and using repentance, come to Divine Bap-
 tism, and by the Priestly hand receive the Grace of the
 Spirit. The Priestly hand is before shew'd in this Chap-
 ter to be the Bishops hand.

C H A P. VI.

The Sum of the Primitive Doctrine.

BY all these undoubted Testimonies of the Fathers, who
 liv'd in the purer times of the Church, it very plainly
 appears what was the Universal Doctrine of the Ancient
 Catholick and Apostolick Church concerning Confirmation,
 that they taught the very same which has in this Discourse
 been shew'd to be the Doctrine of the Holy Scripture,
 namely, That by the Prayer and Laying on of the hands
 of the Bishop, there is given to Christians a Special Higher
 Degree of the Grace of the Holy Spirit, over and above
 that which they receiv'd in their Baptism: That thereby,
 as *St. Jerome* intimates, and the other Fathers suppose, e-
 very Christian, duly prepar'd for it, receives his part of that
 Gift of the Holy Ghost which was given to the Apostles on
 the Day of Pentecost, and which *St. Peter* then promis'd
 to all that repent, and are Baptized in the Name of Jesus
 Christ. They did not, as *St. Augustine* tells us, look for
 miraculous Inspirations; but as *St. Ambrose* writes, the Per-
 fection of the Grace of Baptism, in the Spirit of Wisdom
 and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Virtue, the
 Spirit of Knowledge and Godliness, and the Spirit of Holy
 Fear. And *St. Ambrose*, *St. Chrysostom*, and *Theodoret* wit-
 nesses, that the *Laying on of hands*, which *Heb. VI.* is one of
 the Principles of the foundation of the Doctrine of Christ, is
 meant of Confirmation.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

The Doctrine of the Church of England concerning Confirmation.

IT is no other than what is before taught. In the old Rubrick before the reign of King Charles the Second, are these Words, Confirmation is ministred to them that be Baptized, that by Imposition of Hands and Prayer, they may receive strength and defence against all temptations to Sin, and the Assaults of the World and the Devil. Why this is not in the present Rubrick we are not told. But in the Preface to the Liturgy we are earnestly assur'd, that no alteration was made upon the account of any Error. And what is left out of the Rubrick, is more fully express'd in the Prayers.

In the first Prayer, the Grace of Baptism, and the Grace of Confirmation are distinctly express'd. The Grace of Baptism is first acknowledged in these Words. 'Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy Servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them the forgiveness of all their Sins. 'Then the Grace of Confirmation is thus pray'd for, Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter; and daily increase in them thy manifold Gifts of Grace; the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, &c. For it was the Holy Ghost the Comforter, that was to be given in Confirmation after Christ's Ascension, *John XVI. 7.* to strengthen Christians, *Acts IV. 31.*; and to increase in them the manifold Gifts of Grace, *John VII. 38.* According to this is the Prayer, 'when the Bishop lays on his hand, that the Person Confirm'd may be *Defended with God's Heavenly Grace, and daily increase in his Holy Spirit more and more.*

In another of the Prayers are these Words, We make our humble Supplications unto thee for these thy Servants, upon whom (after the Example of thy Holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands, to certifie them (by this sign) of thy Favour and Gracious Goodness towards them. Let thy Fatherly hand, we beseech thee, ever be over them; let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them.

Now

Now how does the Bishop certify them (by this Sign) of God's Favour and gracious Goodness towards them, but by assuring them that they shall receive the Grace of the Holy Spirit, promised to be given them by the laying on of the Hands and Blessing of the Apostles and Bishops?

But now is it to be remembred that our Church does not contradict itself, and teach another Sacrament (as shall be shew'd in the ninth Chapter) altho' this laying on of Hands is ordain'd for all Christians.

The Rubrick at the End of the Order of Baptism of those of riper Years, says, It is expedient that every Person thus baptized, should be confirmed by the Bishop so soon after his Baptism as conveniently he may; that so he may be admitted to the Holy Communion.

But the Rubrick does not mean an Expediency that may be omitted, as appears by its making it the Condition of being admitted to the Holy Communion. And the Rubrick at the End of the Order of Confirmation, says, 'There shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such Time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.

The Rubrick before the Order of Publick Baptism of Infants, says, *It is expedient that Baptism be ministred in the vulgar Tongue.* And, that is without doubt an indispenfible Duty, if a Minister can be had that understands the vulgar Tongue. 1 Cor. XIV. 15, 16.

It is no more than what the Holy Scripture does, to say, *It is expedient*, of things of the greatest Necessity. Joh. XI. 50, &c. it is prophesied of Christ, *That it is expedient for us that one Man should die for the People, and that the whole Nation perish not.* And Ch. XVI. 7. Christ says to his Disciples, *It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

Therefore the Words in the aforesaid Rubrick, *It is expedient*, do not imply that it is not necessary when it may be done; but that it is a Duty of great Benefit, if rightly done. Our Church may very well say, *It is expedient*, of the necessary Duty whereby the Comforter is received; when Christ says the same of the Necessity of his going to Heaven to send him.

And by that Rubrick it appears how contrary to the Doctrine of our Church, is their Opinion, who think Confirmation to be no more than the solemn taking upon our
selves

Ch. 7. England concerning Confirmation. 31

selves the Vow, which our Godfathers and Godmother made in our Name: When the Church teaches it to be the Duty of every one of those, who in their Baptism have most solemnly vow'd in their own Name. And the Words of the Church, both in the Rubrick and in the Prayers, and in the old Rubrick before cited, cannot fairly be thought to speak of it any otherwise, than as a necessary Duty of great Benefit; altho a subtil Wit may understand the Words not so strictly.

The sixtieth Canon does indeed so describe this Duty, as that they who do not believe it ordain'd of God, may agree to it as a good Institution of the Church. The Words are, 'It hath been a solemn, ancient, and laudable Custom in the Church of God, continued from the Apostles Time, that all Bishops should lay their Hands on Children baptized, and instructed in the Catechism of Christian Religion, praying over them, and blessing them, which we commonly call Confirmation.

In these Words, both they that believe Confirmation ordain'd of God, and they that do not so believe, may fully agree. For the Ordinances of God are in the Scripture call'd Customs, as *Acts VI. 14. The Customs which Moses deliver'd us. Luke II. 27. The Custom of the Law. And Ver. 42. The Custom of the Feast.* And there is Reason to believe that the Canon was so worded, as that the Members of the Church of *Scotland*, out of which the King then came, might be inclin'd to Unity with the Church of *England*.

The same Moderation is in the Words of the Homily of Common-Prayer and Sacraments. Thus the Homily says, 'There are retained, by the Order of the Church of *England*, certain Rites and Ceremonies about the Institution of Ministers in the Church, Matrimony, Confirmation of the Children, by examining them of their Knowledge in the Articles of the Faith, and joyning thereto the Prayers of the Church for them; and likewise for the Visitation of the Sick.' And then of Confirmation and the Visitation of the Sick, it is said, 'They are judg'd to be such Ordinances as may make for the Instruction, Comfort, and Edification of Christ's Church.

So our Church, in her chief writings, which certainly are the Liturgy, plainly teaches the Truth of God's Word concerning Confirmation, as one of the necessary Means of Grace; that her Genuine Sons may not want Satisfaction. And in other Writings She so expresses the same Truth, as that

32 Calvin's Confession concerning Confir. Part II.

that they that cannot fully agree to it, may keep in Unity with her, letting them know how She is willing to receive them. And this charitable Moderation of the Church should not make the Ordinance of God less esteem'd, but obtain a greater Regard to the Laws of the Church.

CHAP. VIII.

Calvin's Confession concerning Confirmation.

EVEN he, in his Comment on *Heb. VI. 2.* confesses the Laying on of Hands there, to be meant of Confirmation, For of the same he has these Words; *Transacta vero infantia, postquam instituti erant in fide, se quoque ad catechesin offerebant, quæ in illis Baptismo erat posterior. Sed aliud symbolum tunc adhibebatur, nempe manuum impositio. Hic unus locus abunde testatur, hujus ceremoniæ originem fluxisse ab Apostolis: quæ tamen postea in Superstitionem versa fuit, &c.*

Quamobrem hodie retinenda pura institutio est: superstitio autem corrigenda.

'When they were past their Infancy, after they were instructed in the Faith, they offer'd themselves also to Catechizing, which in them was after Baptism. But then another Sign was applied, namely Laying on of Hands. This one Place abundantly testifies, that the Beginning of this Ceremony came from the Apostles; which nevertheless afterward was turn'd into Superstition.

'Wherefore the pure Ordinance is now to be retain'd, but the Superstition is to be corrected. Thus *Calvin* says.

But is to be remembred, that Sacrilegious taking from God's Ordinance, is as bad as Superstitious adding to it. That what came from the Apostles as a Part of the Foundation of the Doctrine of Christ, was ordain'd by Christ himself; * altho' we cannot tell how or when he ordain'd it: And that as that one Place, *Heb. VI. 2.* abundantly testifies, that this Ceremony came from the Apostles; so *Acts* the XVIIIth and XIXth Chapters, do abundantly testify, that it was ordain'd as well for those that were bap-

* 1 Cor: XIV, 37.

See Page 2:

liz'd in their riper Years, as those that were baptiz'd in their Infancy. The same was the Doctrine and Practice of the Primitive Church, as appears by the Testimonies before written. Accordingly our Church rightly orders those that are baptiz'd in riper Years, to be Confirm'd before they are admitted to the Holy Communion.

It is also to be remembered, that there are ordain'd of God other necessary means of Grace, besides the Two Sacraments: namely, His holy Word, Catechizing, Exhortation, Prayer, Government. And Confirmation is a principal Prayer for Grace; to which are annexed the Promises of the peculiar Grace of Christianity; *John VII. 37, 38, 39.* as is before shew'd, Ch. 3. of this Part. I do not mean hereby to derogate from the share which each of the Sacraments have in the same Promises: For by Baptism we are made capable of them: and by the Lord's Supper they are secur'd to us, when we have receiv'd them. But it is by the Prayer of Confirmation that we enter into the Possession of them: as by Baptism we enter into the Grace of the New-birth.

CHAP. IX.

Confirmation no Sacrament.

BY the Words *certifie them* (by this Sign) of *thy favour and gracious Goodness towards them*, in the Order of Confirmation, our Church does not contradict it's self, and teach another Sacrament.

Because a special Grace of the Holy Spirit is promis'd to be given by the laying on of the Hands, that is the Blessing * of the Bishop; therefore he certifies them (by this Sign) of the Favour and gracious Goodness of God promis'd to them.

In all Prayer which God has promis'd to hear, we do by the reverent Ceremony us'd therein, certifie our selves and others of God's favour and gracious Goodness which he has promis'd. For because God has promis'd to hear our Prayers, therefore † it is that we fall down and kneel before him, and lift up our Hands to him, and lay our Hands on any particular Person that we pray for. And so laying on of Hands in Confirmation, being no more than an accusom'd natural Ceremony in blessing or praying for particular Persons, ¶ it is no more a Sacrament or a Sacramental Ceremony, than the lifting up the Hands, or kneeling in other Prayer.

* See Part I. Ch. 2.

† *Psal. 130, 4. 1 Tim. 2, 1, to 9.*

¶ *Gen. 48, 14. Matth. 19, 13.*



The T H I R D Part.

The Honour due to Confirmation.

C H A P. I.

Considerations to move us to give a due Honour to Confirmation.



Y what is written in the other Parts, it fully appears beyond all reasonable doubt, That Confirmation is an Ordinance of God, by which rightly and decently done, they who are duly prepar'd for it, do receive their part of the Gift of the Holy Ghost, which was given to the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost. That is, they receive a plenteous increase of the Grace before receiv'd in Baptism, to enable them so much the more to understand, and remember, and obey Christ's Word, as that they may live as becomes the Honour of his Kingdom; that, as he requires higher Degrees of Holiness than were before required, so they may live accordingly.

The Distinction between this Grace and the Grace of Baptism, is declar'd in the Words of *John the Baptist*, Matth. III. 11. *I indeed Baptize you with Water unto Repentance: But he that cometh after me, shall Baptize you with the Holy Ghost.* For it has been shew'd Part II.Ch.3. that Christ, when he was in the World, and his Apostles after his Ascension, baptiz'd with the same Baptism of Repentance, that *John* baptiz'd with; and promis'd again the same Bap-
tism

Chap. I. Considerations for the Honour, &c. 35

tism of the Holy Ghost, to be afterwards receiv'd. It is true, our Church does not improperly call the Grace of Baptism, baptizing with the Holy Ghost. But it is the Grace of Confirmation, not of Baptism, which the Holy Scripture so calls, both in the Gospels, and in the Acts of the Apostles; and which, 1 Cor. XII. 13. is meant by these Words; *By one Spirit we are all baptiz'd into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles; whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink * into one Spirit.* For there are recounted the several Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were then in Confirmation distributed unto Christians, as unto the several Members of one Body, and for the several Operations of one Spirit or Soul, Acts XIV. 32.

And this Grace is that which our Blessed Lord, John XVI. 17. declares to be more expedient for us, than if he himself had stay'd with us on Earth. He says, *I tell you the Truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

This blessed Grace, as is shew'd, Part I. Ch. 3. is the Seal of those who were made true Christians in Baptism; and the Earnest of their Inheritance; the Spirit that bears witness with their Spirits, that they are the Children and Heirs of God.

Surely then for these Considerations, the Means of this Grace most worthily deserves the highest Honour that can be given to it. Therefore the Administration of it is rightly intrusted only to the High Priests of the Church, to none below the Dignity of Bishops. And a suitable Honour it ought to have in all things concerning it, certainly a great deal more than is now paid by any Order of Men in the Church. I shall therefore endeavour, as God shall enable me, to write the Truth of that Honour which is due to it, and his Will be done in the Success.

The Honour due to this Holy Ordinance, is to be paid;
By those that receive it.

By those that prepare for it the Souls committed to their Charge.

By those that administer it.

* John 7, 37.

C H A P. II.

The Honour to be paid to Confirmation by those that receive it; and first, in their Preparation of Knowledge and Practice.

IT has been shew'd Part I. Ch. 5. That they who are to be Confirm'd, are those that repent, and believe the Gospel, and are Baptiz'd; and consequently are instructed in what they are to believe and do.

Therefore in the Order of Confirmation in the *Common-Prayer-Book*, it is order'd; That none shall be Confirm'd, but such as can say the *Creed*, the *Lord's-Prayer* and the *Ten Commandments*; and can also answer to such other Questions, as in the short *Catechism* are contain'd.

Now this must suppose they have a competent Understanding of the *Catechism*, and believe and do according to it. For Saying without Understanding signifies nothing, and Understanding without Practice does no good.

But for a competent Understanding of the *Catechism*, they are to understand not only the immediate Sense of the Words, but the reasonable Meaning of them. For Instance, They must know what God is, so far as is convenient for them; what Christ was Crucified, Dead and Buried for; for what he sitteth at the Right-Hand of God; how to worship God, and give him Thanks, and call upon him, and that constantly, both in private, and at least in some of the most necessary Prayers in Publick, never without Understanding and Devotion; that they must honour not only God's Holy Name and Word, but also his House and Ministers, and Sacraments, and all things that are holy to him; that they must do to all Men as they would be done to; in the Duties of Mercy and Charity, as well as of Justice; what is the Work of repenting truly of their Sins, &c.

And they must know what Confirmation is, and how to do their Parts in it with Understanding and Devotion, both in the renewing of their Vow, and in all the few Prayers of it.

So that there is a great deal more to be learned besides the Words of the *Catechism*. Which that they may do, it is necessary for them diligently to read or hear the Scriptures, to learn some good Exposition of the *Catechism*, and to at-

tend

Chap. 2. *requir'd of Persons to be Confirm'd.* 37

tend constantly and carefully to the expounding of it by their Ministers; keeping constantly to one and their own Minister, and never neglecting his expounding of the Catechism, for the hearing of any Sermon.

Some such help as they have for learning to understand the Catechism, must they also have for their understanding the Prayers of the Church: *It is easie to give the Sacrifice of Fools, Eccles. 1.* but not to Pray with right Understanding and Devotion. Before they are Confirm'd, they may not be taught less, than to confess their Sins in the Confession of the Church; to Pray for all Men as well as themselves, in the Lord's Prayer; to profess their Faith in the Creed; to give Thanks for all Men as well as themselves, in the general Thanksgiving; and at the reading of the Commandments, after each Commandment, to beg God's Pardon for their Sins against it, and his Grace to keep it. This will be a good beginning to joyn in the publick Worship. But if they be given to learn in due time, as soon as they are able to learn, they may learn all the Daily and Sunday Service, and the Offices of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Communion, before the time of being Confirm'd. If they do not understand at their first learning, what they are taught, they will understand something of it, and the rest by Degrees. And when they come to Age for Confirmation, a great Work will be already done; and they will not repent of the pains they have taken in it.

A due or reasonable knowledge of God and our Dury, is not to be lightly had. But as it most worthily deserves, so it requires, a great deal of Pains and Time. They whose Callings require them to labour or do business from Morning till Evening, may lose no time that may be gain'd for this great Work. And they who have more Leisure, have no want of need to imploy all their Leisure therein.

As thou must diligently learn, so thou must diligently practice all thou learneest, not only what thou art willing to do, or the World allows of, or thy worldly gain does not hinder. For *Matth. 28, 20.* Christ commands his Ministers to *teach us to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded.* And *Ch. 5, 19,* he declares, that *whosoever shall break one of the least Commandments, and teach Men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven;* that is, shall not be thought fit to enter therein.

When thou hast attain'd to a compleat measure of Knowledge, and dost live accordingly, thou mayst not think thou

art well enough. But, as long as thou livest, and how learned and good soever thou art, the command of St. Peter 2 Ep. III. 17, 18, is to be continually observed with all diligence (Ch. 1, 5.) *Beware lest ye also being led away with the errors of the wicked, fall from your own Stedfastness. But grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* And this is the very thing which the Bishop prays for, when he lays his Hand upon thee.

When thou hast attain'd to a compleat measure of Knowledge, living according to it, and giving up thy self with all diligence to grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord, then, and not before, thou art fit to be Confirm'd.

And that thou mayst then receive the inestimable Benefit and Comfort of it, there are three things to be done.

1. A due Preparation before it;
2. A Devout Behaviour in it;
3. A diligent Care after.

CHAP. III.

The Immediate Preparation.

FOR so Important a Work, there must be suitable Preparation. The Work is to Pray for, and obtain the Holy Ghost the Comforter, that is, a most comfortable plentiful Increase of the Grace of the Holy Ghost given before in Baptism.

Therefore, to prepare thy self duly for the Work, it is necessary for thee to consider how thou hast made use of the Grace which God gave thee in thy Baptism, by performing the Vow then made in thy Name; and earnestly to repent of all the breaches of it; and stedfastly to resolve to perform it fully to the utmost of thy power, as God shall enable thee.

How this is to be done, our Church teaches in the Exhortation, whereby warning is given of the Holy Communion, in these words; *First, to examine your lives and conversations by the rule of Gods Commandments; and whereinsoever ye shall perceive your selves to have offended, either by will, word, or deed, there to bewail your own Sinfulness, and to confess your selves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of Life. And if ye shall perceive your offences to be such as are not only against God, but also against your Neighbours, then ye shall reconcile your selves unto them, being ready to make restitution and satisfaction, according to the uttermost of your power,*

Chap. 3. requir'd of Persons to be Confirm'd. 39

ers, for all injuries and wrongs done by you to any other; and being likewise ready to forgive others that have offended you, as ye would have forgiveness of your offences at Gods hands.

But herein thou must remember to do according to the words in the same Exhortation. ' So to search and examine your own Consciences, (and that not lightly, and after the manner of Dissemblers with God, but so) that ye may come Holy and Clean.

In examining thy Life and Conversation, thou art to call to mind, and find out as many of thy Sins as thou canst, and also their circumstances that do increase their Guilt. Such circumstances are, 1. Doing that which thou knowest to be a Sin, or leaving undone that which thou knowest to be a Duty. *Luke* 12, 47: 2. Doing evil, or having undone a Duty, when thou hast time to consider of it. 3. Sinning wilfully against the Checks and admonitions of thy Conscience, see *Numb.* 15, 30, 31. 4. Falling again into the same Sin. 5. Repeating it often. 6. Sinning after Vows and Resolutions of Amendment. 7. Continuing in the Sin till it comes to a Habit. 8. Continuing in it notwithstanding Gods corrections, or his extraordinary Mercies, or notwithstanding all Reproofs and Exhortations, either of Ministers, or of private Friends. 9. Loving the Sin, and taking pleasure in them that commit it.

Here is also to be remembred, that it is a Sin, to do that which thou believest to be a Sin, altho' it be in it self Innocent. *Rom.* 14, 14, 23.

In bewailing thy Sins, thou art not only to bewail the danger of their Punishment, but to do as the Church teaches in the Homily of Repentance in these Words. ' We must be earnestly sorry for our Sins, and unfeignedly lament and bewail that we have by them so grievously offended our most bounteous and merciful God, who so tenderly lov'd us, that he gave his only begotten Son to die a most bitter Death, and to shed his dear Hearts Blood for our Redemption and Deliverance.' And the greater Sinner thou hast been, the more thou art to bewail and lament.

In Confessing thy Sins, thou art to confess them not only in general, as is done in publick Prayers, but also all the particular Sins, or kinds of them, that thou canst remember, with all the Circumstances that do increase their Guilt, thou art also to confess, that thou art guilty of many Sins that thou art ignorant of, or hast forgotten, *Pf.* 19, 12. When thou hast so confess'd thy Sins with that Godly sorrow, and

a full Purpose of amendment of Life, then thou mayst, and must humbly and earnestly beg of God to have Mercy upon thee, and to forgive thee all thy Sins for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ, who was put to death upon the Cross for the Forgiveness of our Sins.

And for his Sake, *who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works,* thou must humbly and earnestly beg the Grace of the Holy Spirit, to enable thee to forsake all thy Sins, and to do thy whole Duty all the rest of thy Life.

Then, as the said Homily of Repentance teaches, 'Thou art to take hold upon the Promises of God touching the free Pardon and Forgiveness of our Sins, made to the truly Penitent, *Luke XXIV. 47.* and stedfastly believe that God, for his Son Jesus Christ's Sake, will forgive thee all thy Sins'.

Thou art also to lay hold on the Promises of the Grace of the Holy Ghost, *Luke XI. 13.* and likewise stedfastly believe that, for Christ's Sake God will give thee his Holy Spirit, to enable thee to do what he requires: and also that he will give thee in Confirmation, that bounteous Gift of the Holy Ghost, which he has promis'd therein, *John VII. 37, 38, 39.*

But the Promises of God are upon condition that thou dost without delay, carefully forsake all thy Sins, *Prov. XXVIII. 13.* and make Restitution and Satisfaction to the utmost of thy Power, for all Injuries and Wrongs done by thee to any other, *Matth. V. 23, 31. Ezek. XXXIII. 15.* and from the bottom of thy Heart forgive all that have offended thee, *Matth. VI. 14, 15.*

In forsaking thy Sins, and amending thy Life, the two first and great Commandments are to be very carefully done, *Mar. XII. 30, 31.* *Jesus said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, and with all thy Strength: this is the First Commandment. And the Second, is like; namely this, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* If thou duly obeyest these Commandments, then thou wilt never be slack, nor sparing either of Labour or of Time, or of Cost, in any service of God; nor ever be injurious or hard, or uncharitable to any Man; as thou wouldest not have any Man be so to thee.

These Duties of Repentance are no more, than what are necessary to make every one fit for any service of God, and

and capable of receiving any Mercy from him. And therefore they must be done to make us capable of the great Benefit of Confirmation.

For the Work of Repentance a day of Fasting is to be set apart. We are thus often to repent solemnly of our Sins with fasting, especially upon great and extraordinary occasions: such is coming to Confirmation. And if thou fastest in secret as thou oughtest, Christ has said, *Thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly*, Matth. VI. 4. Besides, in this Ordinance, what remains of Satan in thine Heart is to be cast out. And Chap. XVII. 21. of the same Gospel, Christ says, *This kind goeth not out but by Prayer and Fasting*. Much more then thou art to fast, when thou art also to be fill'd with the Holy Spirit of God.

In thy Preparation forget not the Command of the Apostle, *Phil. IV. 6. In every thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God*. Therefore give most humble and hearty Thanks for the blessed Ordinance of Confirmation, and the Promises of inestimable Grace thereby. And most humbly and earnestly beg of God, to prepare thee duly for his holy Ordinance, to assist thee therein; and to give thee the Grace of the Holy Spirit promis'd thereby.

Be ready and willing to give thy Minister all the Satisfaction he shall desire, of thy being fit and prepar'd; that he may with a good Conscience present thee to the Bishop. And be likewise ready and willing to give the same Satisfaction to the Bishop.

Refuse not Examination, altho' thou art past the age of Youth. In a Business of so great Importance, and wherein so many deceive both their Spiritual Pastors and themselves, thou canst not give more Satisfaction than is needful. And to refuse to give any Satisfaction that is needful, to those that must give account to God of thy Soul, is to deprive thyself of receiving benefit by their Ministry, *Heb. XII. 17*.

When Prince Charles * (afterward a truly most religious and gracious King, and Martyr) was Confirm'd, he first answer'd to a long and strict Examination by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Bath and Wells. And if all were effectually bound to be so examin'd, by whom so ever fit Person it be, and to be duly prepar'd for such Ex-

mination; unspeakable would the Benefit be, which the Church and every Member of it would receive thereby.

We are generally apt to think better of our selves, than truly we are. And the best of us are imperfect, both in Knowledge, and in our Duty. And there is no doubt that many come to be Confirm'd, who are far from being fit for it. Therefore it is for the good of all, but indispensably necessary for the far greater part, to be willing to be examined: that they who are well prepar'd may see and amend their Imperfections; and that they who are not duly prepar'd, may be exhorted to do what is wanting, and not receive God's Ordinance unworthily to their hurt.

Therefore acquaint thy Minister with thy desire to be Confirm'd, as soon as notice is given of the Day; that he may have time to consider in so weighty a Business, and give thee such Counsel as is best for thee.

Neglect not to have a Godfather, or a Godmother, for a Witness of thy Confirmation: because the Church requires it. And chuse such a one as is fit to put thee in mind of thy Duty, when there is occasion. For every body, as well of the old, as of the young, often wants to be put in mind. We are commanded to *exhort one another daily*, Heb. III. 13.

In all things shew thy self obedient to the Church, and also to the Directions of the Bishop, of thy Minister, and of thy Parents or Master. For *Eph. VI. 2, 3.* it is written; *Honour thy Father and Mother* (those are all thy Superiors) *that it may be well with thee.* And *1 Per. V. 5.* *Ye younger, submit your selves to the elder: Yea, all of you be subject one to another; and be cloathed with Humility: for God visiteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble.* Remember this, that *God visiteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble;* and let not any thing of Pride, or any want of Humility deprive thee of the great Benefit of this means of Grace. But it is to be remember'd, that God is to be obey'd and honour'd above all. Therefore if any thing be requir'd of thee, that is contrary to thy Duty, either by thy Minister, or by thy Parents, who perhaps may desire thee to go to Confirmation, before thou art ready for it, thou mayst by no means yield to any such thing.

If Confirmation be done in the accustomed manner, where thou art to receive it; get thy Minister, or some other fit Person, to pray the Bishop to Confirm thee, where-soever he pleases, in that decent Order which God's Ordinance

nance and the Church require. And chuse rather to go never so far to his place of Residence, than to be confirm'd in the accustomed rude way. It is impossible for a good Man to deny thy Request. And assure thy self that God will pay thee well for thy Care, and for thy Journey.

CHAP. IV.

The Behaviour of Persons Confirm'd in their Confirmation. The Order of Confirmation in the Book of Common-Prayer, explain'd.

AS to thy devout Behaviour: to consider how to do this, is another necessary part of thy Preparation. First, Be sure to be in the Presence of the Bishop, before the Service begins, and to continue with him within hearing till it is ended. But if thou seest crowding, and no care taken for Order as the Church requires; then hope for more Grace by departing, than by staying: and do as thou art advis'd in the end of the foregoing Chapter.

Two things are to be done by thee.

The one is to satisfy the Bishop and the Congregation, that thou dost stand to, and stedfastly resolve to perform the Vow of thy Baptism, to the end that he may give thee his Blessing. Thou didst take upon thee thy Vow as soon as thou wast sensible of thy Duty, and didst resolve to live a Christian Life.

The other thing to be done now, is to pray humbly and earnestly with the Bishop, for the Grace of the Holy Spirit promis'd in Confirmation, to enable thee to perform thy Vow, as fully as the Gospel requires; and to pray with a stedfast Belief that God will, for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ, perform to thee the same Promise.

For thy doing these things with Understanding, it is needful to give thee some Explanation of the Order of Confirmation. Wherein, if I explain more than is needful to some, I shall not do so to many others, who for want of Education, understand not many common plain Words and Sayings.

In the Preface, ratifie and confirm the same, is consent and agree to it, as their own Vow: Assented is agreed.

The Bishop demands three things of thee:

First,

First, To renew, that is, promise and vow again, 'in the Presence of God, and of the Congregation, the solemn Promise and Vow that was made in thy Name at thy Baptism'. Secondly, 'To ratifie and confirm the same in thy own Person'; that is, to declare that thou dost consent and agree to the same Promise and Vow, as if thou didst make it thy self. And 'Thirdly, to confess that thou art bound to believe and to do all those things which thy Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for thee.

To these Demands thou art to answer, standing 'I do; that is, 'I do promise and vow again, in the Presence of God, and of this Congregation, the solemn Promise and Vow that was made in my Name at my Baptism. I do consent and agree to the same Vow, as if I made it my self, and confess that I am bound to do all those things which my Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for me'.

Whatever thou seest others do, fail not to answer audibly and heartily, I do; with such an audible (that is, plainly heard) and hearty, and with all humble Voice, as that the Bishop and the Congregation may see thou art in earnest.

Every one is requir'd, with great reason to make this Answer, to shew that he is prepar'd for Confirmation. Therefore none may presume to receive Confirmation without it. And should not the Bishop see it done by every one on whom he lays his Hands? If they be placed, and standing in order before him, as the Rubrick requires, he or one appointed by him, may see them answer in order one after another; and if there be a great number, it will be decent for them to be divided into Companies, and for the Bishop to make the Demand severally to each Company.

When all have given their Answer, then reverently kneel down to pray with the Bishop.

Then he says, 'Our help is in the Name of the Lord'; that is, 'It is by God's help alone that we perform our Vow'.

Thou art to answer upon thy Knees, 'who hath made Heaven and Earth'. Thereby we are sure he is able to help us.

The Bishop says, 'Blessed be the Name of the Lord'; That is, 'we thank and praise the Lord for the Grace of his Holy Spirit, which he gives us to perform our Vow'.

Thou dost answer, 'Henceforth world without end we thank and praise the Lord for the same Grace,

Ch: 4. *The Order of Confirmation explain'd.* 45

The Bishop says, ' Lord, hear our Prayers.

Thou answerest, ' And let our Cry come unto thee', to obtain what we pray for.

Here again fail not to make these Answers reverently and heartily; and by no means follow the evil Example of others Silence. May thy Tongue be silent in the Service of him, who gave thee thy Tongue and Speech? And in all the Prayers (they are not long, but so much the better, *Eccles. V. 2.*) join with the Bishop with all the humble earnestness thou art able. It is a great and inestimable Gift, which thou dost pray for: and thou mayst not hope that God will grant thee such a Gift, without such humble earnestness, *Luke XI. 8, to 14.*

Then as the Apostles *Peter* and *John*, when they confirm'd the *Samaritans*, *Acts VIII.* before they laid their Hands on them, *prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost*: So the Bishop prays for those that are to be confirm'd, with a Prayer, wherein he first thankfully acknowledges the Grace receiv'd in Baptism, in those Words, ' Almighty and everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed (*been pleased*) to regenerate (*to give a new birth unto righteous living to*) these thy Servants by Water and the Holy Ghost; and hast given unto them the forgiveness of all their Sins; (*then he prays for the Grace of Confirmation*) ' strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold Gifts of Grace; the Spirit of Wisdom (*to refuse evil, and chuse the good*) and Understanding (*of their Duty*;) the Spirit of Counsel (*to resolve well and wisely*) and ghostly strength (*of Soul to perform their good Resolutions*;) the Spirit of Knowledge (*of the Mysteries of Christianity*) and true Godliness (*in all the Worship of God*;) and fill them, O Lord, with the Spirit of thy holy fear (*to displease thee, or be wanting in that high Reverence and Respect that is due unto thy great Majesty*) now and for ever, Amen.

If we have these gifts of Grace, all other sanctifying Graces will naturally flow from them, Faith, Hope, Charity, Humility, Patience, Justice, Diligence, Temperance, Chastity, Contentedness, and the rest.

To this, and all the other Prayers, besure to hearken carefully; and devoutly say *Amen* to God, meaning, as thou sayest in the *Litany*, *We beseech thee to hear us good Lord.*

As the Apostles *Peter* and *John*, after they had pray'd for the *Samaritans*, that they might receive the Holy Ghost, *then*

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then laid their Hands on them, that is, with laying on of their Hands, pray'd particularly for every one: (see Part. I. Ch. 2.) so does the Bishop, praying again for the same Grace in fewer Words. He says, 'Defend, O Lord, this thy Child (or this thy Servant) with thy heavenly Grace, that he may continue thine for ever; and daily increase in thy holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto thy everlasting Kingdom, *Amen*.

Remember to pray with the Bishop with all the earnestness thou art able, and so to say unto God, *Amen*.

If there be more than can kneel where the Bishop is, none should strive to come before others; but all should be reverently brought, one Company after another, by their Ministers, or whom the Bishop appoints; and again brought by their Ministers to their places, which must be within hearing of the Bishop.

While the Bishop is giving his Blessing to others, abide quietly in thy Place, and there talk not with any Body. And if any one speaks to thee, answer him not, but imploy thy self as thou oughtest to do; either pray with the Bishop for those he lays his Hands on. Or think of stedfast resolving to perform the Vow thou hast now renew'd; and of doing thy utmost endeavour to increase daily in all Christian Graces, according as thou hast pray'd: or stir up thy Belief of the Promises of God's holy Spirit. Read them, *John VII. 37, 38, 39. Ch. 14. 15, 16, 36. Acts II. 38, 39.* lay hold on them, and stedfastly believe that God for Christ's Sake, will perform them to thee; so long as thou dost thy endeavour, and dost humbly and earnestly pray for his Grace; and likewise humbly and earnestly give him Thanks for it.

And think of and read the Prayers that remain to be said, that thou mayst be more ready to join with the Bishop in them.

* When the Bishop has done laying on his Hand, he says, 'The Lord be with you', to help you in praying now.

Remember to answer devoutly, 'And with thy Spirit', praying that God may also help his Spirit in the Prayers for thy self, and thy Brethren confirm'd with thee.

* Here it would be a very good thing, for the Congregation to sing a Psalm or Hymn, suitable to the Occasion, *Psalm 51. 9, to 13.* is very proper to stir up a humble earnestness.

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In those Prayers all are commanded to kneel down ; therefore kneel decently and reverently : And refuse not to kneel, as some are apt to do, for a foolish Reason. What had our blessed Lord under him, when *he kneeled down and pray'd*, Luke XXII. 41? or his Apostle St. Paul, and his Congregation, *Acts XXI. 5.*

In Obedience to our Saviour's Command, *Luke XI. 2.* *When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c.* the Bishop prays in that Prayer. For thy praying therein with understanding, consider this short Exposition.

Our Father which art in Heaven, honour'd above all things be thou, and all things that belong to thee. Thy Grace rule in all our Hearts more and more, till it rules perfectly in Heaven. Thy will be done, as it ought to be, by us and all in Earth, as it is done in Heaven by the Angels and Saints. Give us that do thy Will, this day all things that are needful both for our Souls and Bodies. And forgive us our Trespases ; for we perform the Condition, we forgive them that trespass against us, Matth. VI. 14, 15. and lead us not, by denying the help of thy Grace, into the Power of Temptation ; but deliver us from Sin. Amen.

The Prayers that follow are to express our earnestness and importunity to obtain the Grace promis'd in this Ordinance. For *Luke XI. 5, &c.* our Lord commands us to be importunate in praying for the Grace of the Holy Spirit. Those Prayers therefore understand as follows.

O most mighty Lord of all, and everlasting God, who makest us both to will and to do those things that be good and pleasing unto thy Godly Majesty ; we, in a Sense of our unworthiness of any good from thee, make our humble Supplications unto thee for these thy Servants, upon whom (after the Example of thy Holy Apostles) we have now laid our Hands, to let them know (by this Sign) † that thou wilt grant them thy Favour and gracious Goodness which thou hast promis'd by our Blessing. Let thy Fatherly Hand defending and guiding them, we beseech thee, ever be over them ; let thy holy Spirit ever be with them, and so lead them in the Knowledge and Obedience of thy Word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting Life, through our Lord Jesus Christ ; that is for his Sake, and by him ; for his Sake who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar Peo-

† See part 2. ch. 2,

ple zealous of good Works, Tit. II. 14. and by him, who hath Power to give us all we pray for, in that with thee and the Holy Ghost, he liveth and reigneth, ever one and the same God, World without End.

In this Prayer the Bishop says *laid our Hands*: and he is before order'd to lay his Hand. Laying on Hands is a Scripture Expression to signifie laying on one of the Hands, as Mark X. 16. it is said, *he took them up in his Arms, put his hands upon them*. Now this can be understood but of one of his Hands: for the other was imploy'd in holding them. So Numb. XXVII. 18. God says to Moses, *lay thine hand upon him*: and vers. 23. it is said, *he laid his Hands upon him*.

O Lord able to do all things, and everlasting God, be pleased we beseech thee, to direct, sanctifie and govern both our Hearts and Bodies, in the Ways of thy Laws, and in the Works of thy Commandments, that through thy most mighty defending us, both in this Place, and all the rest of our Life, we may be preserved from all Sin, and in all Holiness, in Body and Soul, for the Sake, and by the Power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Then the Bishop blesses those that have truly and devoutly done their Duty. For they are the Sons of Peace, on whom his Peace, that is, his Blessing shall rest, Luke X. 6. which that it may rest on thee, do thou humbly receive it, continuing upon thy Knees: and devoutly say *Amen* to it, understanding it in this Sense.

The Blessing of God the Lord of all, namely the Blessing of the Father from whom, the Son by whom, and the Holy Ghost in whom all blessing is given, be upon you, and remain with you for ever. *Amen*.

This sense of this Blessing is according to what our Church teaches in the Homily of the Holy Scripture. The Words are, 'In these Books we shall find the Father from whom, the Son by whom, and the Holy Ghost in whom, all things have their Being and keeping up; and these Three Persons to be but one God, and one Substance'.

Remember, while thou takest care of thy own Duty, withal to take heed of thinking too highly of thy self, and of censuring and judging those that do not as they should, lest thy Pride prove worse than their ignorant neglect, Luke XVIII. 9, &c. but be thankful for the undeserved Grace of God given to thee; and pray for what thou seeest wanting in others.

Thou

Thou hast now read how to prepare thy self for thy Confirmation, and for thy Behaviour therein. If thou dost accordingly, there is no doubt, but thou shalt speedily find the Benefit of it, if not immediately; provided thou art not wanting in thy diligent Care after.

CHAP. V.

The Diligent Care after.

THOU hast pray'd with the Bishop, that God will strengthen thee with the Holy Ghost the Comforter; and defend thee with his heavenly Grace, that thou mayst continue his for ever.

Therefore remember the Command and Promise, *Jam. IV. 7. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.* But this must be done manfully and constantly, and then thou art sure of God's Promise, *Heb. XIII. 5. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

Thou hast also pray'd with the Bishop, that God will daily increase in thee his manifold Gifts of Grace; that thou mayst daily increase in his Holy Spirit more and more, until thou comest into his everlasting Kingdom.

Therefore thou must daily and diligently use the Means of Grace, carefully reading and hearing the Holy Scriptures, and such other Books as are needful, and endeavouring to do all they teach; strictly watching over thy Actions, and calling thy self to account for thy Sins, and amending thy Life more and more.

Have always in thy Mind, the First and great Commandment, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, and with all thy Strength.* If thou dost so love God, then thou wilt do as thou art commanded, *1 Cor. XV. 58. Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord.* And *1 Thes. IV. 1. We beseech you Brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have receiv'd of us how you ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.* And this abounding more and more is to be done, although thou dost any Duty never so well; as the Apostle teaches in the same *Chap. ver. 9, 10.*

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But

But in thy abounding more and more in all things that are pleasing to God, take heed thou do not forget to increase more and more in Humility. For the better any Man is, the more humble he is. † Who could be more humble than our Blessed Lord? And *Matth. XI. 29.* he says, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart.* *Luke IX. 48.* when his Disciples were disputing who should be greatest, he says to them, *He that is least among you all, the same shall be great.* So then he that is least in his own Sight, and so most humble, he shall be greatest in the Esteem of our Saviour, and be most highly exalted by him. And *Matth. XVIII. 3.* he tells them, *Except ye become as little Children* (that is humble like little Children, *ver. 4.*) *ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

The abounding more and more in our Duty, is not always increasing in the Quantity, as in the Length of our Prayers. For the wise Man says, *God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy Words be few.* For --- a Fools Voice is known by multitude of Words. *Ecclesi. V. 2, 3.* *Matth. VI, 7, 8.* our Saviour says, *The Heathen think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye like unto them.* And *Chap. XXIII, 14,* *Hypocrites for a Pretence make long Prayer.*

Instead therefore of long Prayer, we are to do our best Endeavour to pray better and better, in due Season, in all the Times of Prayer, both in Publick and in Private, constantly, never suffering our selves to be hindred by light Excuses, or by any thing less than great and invincible Necessity.

To pray better and better, supposes that thou dost pray well, understanding what thou sayst, and praying heartily, and with humble Reverence. And it is to understand thy Prayers more fully, to confess thy Sins with more Godly Sorrow, and Hatred of them, to give thanks with more lively Sense of Gods Mercies, to pray for Grace with more hungering and thirsting after it, to pray for others with more Charity, and to do all with more Attention, and with more Humility and Reverence.

To do one of these, to understand well what thou sayst in all the Prayers of the Church, and to keep up and improve the same, may find thee Work enough on *Sundays* and other *Holy Days*, that thou shalt not need to seek for *Worldly Business* to imploy thy Time.

† *Luke VII. 6. VII, 9,*

Eph. III. 8,

Again, the abounding more and more in Reading and Meditation, is not the bestowing more and more Time on this Duty. For excessive Study does but weaken the Understanding and Memory, and make thee less fit for the Service of God. But it is the more diligent and constant imploying as much Time as is agreeable to thy Strength, and can be spar'd from the Duties of thy Calling; and the reading the Holy Scriptures and other Books so as thou mayst most profit, and grow more and more in Christian Knowledge and Practice. By diligent reading and learning according to thy Strength, thou shalt be able to do more and more of this Duty. But by excessive Study thou shalt grow weaker, and do less.

If after thou hast received Confirmation, thou dost thy Endeavour according to these Directions, then so long as thou continuest so doing, God will surely without fail, give and continue to thee the Grace he has promis'd in this Ordinance. He will, as thou hast pray'd with the Bishop. Defend thee with his Heavenly Grace, that thou mayst continue his for ever; and daily increase in his Holy Spirit more and more, until thou comest into his Everlasting Kingdom.

I have no more to add, but for the preserving this Grace, and increase of Grace, thou must truly endeavour to partake of the Lords Supper as often as thou art invited to it, and to partake of it with due Preparation; and with Understanding and Devotion in all the Parts of the Service.

CHAP. VI.

The Honour due to Confirmation from those that are to prepare for it the Souls committed to their Charge. And first, the Duty of Parents and Masters in Instruction. The Necessity of the strict Observation of the Lords Day, and other Holy Days for the same Institution. The Duty of Schoolmasters.

PARENTS are bound by the Law of God and Nature, to take effectual Care for the Well-being of those they brought into the World. And what is the Well-being of the body without the Good of the Soul? How much Care soever they take for their Childrens Bodies, they have no true

Love for them, but are most unnaturally cruel, if they do not diligently provide for their Souls.

Masters also are bound by the Law of God (*Gen. XVII. 13. Chap. XVIII. 19. Deut. V. 14. Josh. XXIV. 15.*) to provide for the Souls, much more than for the Bodies of their Servants.

Now for the Instruction of Children and Servants, it is not sufficient to bring them to Church to be instructed by the Minister in the understanding of the Catechism, how diligent soever he is in expounding it. All he can do on the Lord's Day, will be to little Purpose with ordinary Capacities, without daily Instruction. So unapt are both young and old to learn Things of Religion, altho' they are not so in worldly Matters. They therefore who would have their Children and Servants effectually taught, and in some reasonable Time, have need enough to feed their Souls as often as they feed their Bodies. That their Souls may not be hungry and starving, while their Bodies are full fed, there is need of feeding their Souls so often. If that cannot be, no Time nor Frequency of Time may be lost, that can be gain'd. And Parents and Masters may so often feed the Souls of their Children and Servants, without Loss of Time to other Business. They may make every one say once or twice, as much as a short Verse in the Bible, and if need be, do so again the next Time; and so on till they have it perfectly in their Memories. Then they may teach them as much more after the same manner. They may continue so teaching, taking Care that all they teach be remember'd; either by making the Learners repeat every Time a little of what they have learnt, or by appointing every second or third Time for Repetition only, never holding them long. Half a Quarter of an Hour is enough for young Beginners, and a Minute or two, if only one be taught. By short Lessons they will learn most.

By this Means, both the Catechism, and a full Exposition of it, may be perfectly in the Memory of a Child, when he is seven or eight Years old. And by daily examining him it will be both kept in his Memory, and by Degrees understood.

When they are capable, they may, with a small Addition of Time to the aforesaid Minutes, be shew'd and taught to understand the Scripture Proofs.

After the same manner they may be taught such Prayers as they can understand, and are not too long for them.

And when they have learnt so far, they may be taught to understand the Prayers of the Church, which till they can understand, and also be Devout in them, they ought to be kept silent in the Church, *To be more ready to hear than to give the Sacrifice of Fools*, Eccles. V. 1.

After such a manner as Children are taught, must be taught elder ignorant Persons. For they are as unapt to learn as Children, or rather more unapt. A great deal of Patience must be had, and especial Care must be taken with both Young and Old, that they do not only say Words, but that they mind and understand the Sense, and that as well in plainer as harder Matters. Such Need of this I have found even in Elder Persons, that want not Wit in worldly Matters, that I dare not write least it should be thought incredible: and I doubt not but others may find the like.

Together with these Instructions, the daily reading of the Holy Scriptures may not be neglected. There are none so full of their ordinary Business, but, if they have a willing Mind, may find Time for reading every Day one Chapter at least in the Old Testament, and another in the New Testament. And Masters may very well allow so much Time to their Servants. And they that cannot read, may hear those that can.

But what shall they do where none can read, or perhaps give any Account of the Catechism? Surely they may by no means fail to do all they can, by constant and careful attending in the Church, to the reading of the Scriptures, the Creed, the Lords Prayer, and the Ten Commandments by the Minister, the Repetition of the Catechism by the young People, and the Ministers Instructions; and when they come from the Church, recollecting their Memories, and helping one another to remember what they hear. And no better Thing can be done by any that cannot read, as well the Elder as the Younger, than to learn to read if it be possible.

And for those that cannot read, and others also, it would be very expedient, if in all Parish Churches, where none or few come to daily Prayers, the Psalms and the New Testament were read in continued Order on Sundays. This would be more agreeable to the Design of the Church, than every Sunday to pass over many Psalms and Chapters appointed to be read in continued Order.

All should strive hard to have their Children taught to read, and to read well. And Money given to Charitable Uses, cannot be better bestow'd, than in setting poor Children to School.

And

§4 *The Necessity of strict keeping the Lords Day. P.III.*

And that all may have Time for the Duties of Instruction and Learning, nothing is more necessary than the strict Observation of the Lords Day, and also other Holy Days, as many as can be conveniently kept. For altho' it is possible all sorts of People may diligently apply themselves every Day, or almost every Day, to read the Scriptures, and teach and learn the Catechism and Prayers, yet the far greater Part, such as Servants and Day-Labourers, and others that must work and follow Business early and late, will hardly know how to set themselves to do much on working Days. And the most Diligent of them will want the Time that is necessary for following wholly Business of Importance. Such Business always mix'd with other Matters, cannot be minded or done as it should be.

Nay, all sorts of Men generally want to be driven and forced from the Business and Work of their Bodies, that they may both have themselves, and allow their Servants Time for the Great Work of their Souls.

Therefore it is necessary that the Lords Day, and as many other Holy Days as can be kept conveniently, be kept with all possible Strictness their full Time of twenty four Hours; to bring Christians out of Egyptian Bondage, into the True Christian Liberty of serving and enjoying God, of getting Heavenly Riches, and needful resting and refreshing themselves. And they must go to their Rest in due Time the Night before, that they may rise in Time, and be well dispos'd for the serious and weighty Work of the Day, And their due Rest the Night after is needful, if they have been diligent in the Duties of the Day; and to preserve the Remembrance of what they have read and heard.

To these Ends it is also necessary that all Occasions of Worldly Business on the Lords Day, that are not of great invincible Necessity, be taken away. Such is the going out of Higlens and Waggoners on *Munday* Morning, who might, if they would, go out on *Munday* Night, or *Tuesday* Morning. Such is a great Market for fat Cattle at four or five a Clock every *Munday* Morning at *St. Ives* in *Huntingtonshire*. And such is the Merchants that trade with the Manufactures of *Norwich*, their expecting them to be brought to *London* on *Tuesday* Morning, and not giving Notice in due Time of what they will have brought; and by the going out of Waggoners even on *Sunday* Evening, by all which very great Prophanation is caus'd.

And

And what indispenſible Neceſſity is there for the Ordinary Poſt to travel, or take and deliver Letters on the Lords Day? Should the great Neceſſity of the Spiritual Work of the Day, be neglected for ſuch Worldly Matters! And what Superſtition is there in ſetting apart convenient Time for the moſt neceſſary and the moſt important Work, and in removing all unneceſſary Hindrances out of the way? Alſo why ſhould Souls faſt on the Lords Spiritual Feaſt-Day, for the Pleaſure of Bodies? When nothing is eaſier than to provide well and ſufficiently for the Feaſting of every ſober Body, without the Faſting of any Soul from the Publick Worſhip upon that Account, when there is no other Neceſſity. A duly ſenſible Chriſtian will not make Neceſſity of the Worſhip of the Belly, or of vain Pride, or filthy Lucre, or of his not liking the Weather: He does not ſo undervalue Heavenly Enjoyments; nor is he any ways unwilling that any that belong to him ſhould have their due Share of them. If he has need to ride to Church, he will take Care that his Servant that attends on him ſhall not need to ſtay without, but be in the Church, from before the Beginning, till after the End of Gods Service.

As to the Duty of Schoolmaſters and Schoolmiſtreſſes, they have great Opportunity of inſtructing Souls: While the Scholars are learning to read, they may, by the Means before written, learn to ſay the Catechiſm, and an Expoſition of it. And when they learn the Languages, it will be an excellent Exerciſe for them to turn the Expoſition and the Proofs into *Latin*: And when they learn the Originals of the Scripture, to give out of them the Proofs without Book.

Nothing alſo can be better, than for a Schoolmaſter to teach the Liturgy in *Latin*, and afterwards in *Greek*; and therewith the true Senſe of every Prayer and Hymn. The teaching it both in *Latin* and in *Greek*, will be no needleſs Repetition; but the Means both of ſettling and improving the underſtanding of it. It is not ſo eaſy to be duly underſtood, as they who have not conſider'd it, or care only for the Sacrifice of Fools, may be apt to think.

He may cauſe a Chapter to be read three times a Day by one of the Scholars: And all the reſt may read ſilently with him.

And when Schoolmaſters and Parents, and Maſters of Families, or any of them, are diligent in teaching thoſe that

belong to them, let them take heed they be never negligent to bring them to do and live according to what they teach, and to go before them by a good Example.

CHAP. VII.

The Duty of Ministers in Instruction. The Necessity of their Catechizing every Sunday and Holy Day, and also every Day.

WHEN due Care of Instruction is taken in Families and in Schools, then the constant Catechizing in the Church will have good Effect, it will quicken that Care, that the Children and young People may give a good Account of their Proficiency. And the Minister's careful expounding and proving all Things, will be a great Help to them.

There is indeed no want of printed Expositions of the Catechism: But yet there is an absolute Necessity of expounding it in all Parish Churches. For there are in all Parishes many that cannot read, and many more that having no more Education than to read *English*, have not learn'd to understand many plain Words, much less Words put together in Sentences and Discourses, nor for want of Natural Capacity, but of Education.

For the Instruction of these, it is necessary that the Minister expound constantly the Catechism in the plainest Words that it is possible for him to use. If they will converse with the unlearned of their Flocks, and try and examine their Understandings, they will find it almost impossible to be plain enough for them. And by trying their Memories, they will find that they cannot repeat Spiritual Instructions too often; altho' other Things are easily remembred.

Nay, for all that are well Instructed, nothing is more useful than the constant and careful expounding of the Catechism. For the most Learned have need to be constantly put in mind of the several Parts of their Duty, 2 *Pet.* I. 12. as the Ignorant need to be instructed. And there is no Man, even of the most Learned, that does so perfectly understand even the Catechism, as to need no further Instruction in it: and who may not be improv'd by hearing it honestly and diligently expounded by one that is far inferiour to him in

Learning.

Learning. And likewise of the printed Expositions there is none so perfect, but a diligent Minister of less Learning than the Author, may add thereto useful Observations of his own: He may explain some Things more plainly, and prove more plainly or fully other Things. He may also supply Omissions, and correct Mistakes. And if every Time he renews his own Exposition, he be diligent to correct and improve it, then he takes the right and the best Way for the Edification of all his Hearers. And nothing can be more for the Edification also of himself. Of this Bishop *Beveridge*, in his Preface to his Exposition of the Catechism, very truly says, ' We having at this Time so many worthy and learned Men in our Church - - - I know not how they can employ their Parts of Learning to more Advantage for the Church, their People, or themselves.

How much soever Expounding the Catechism is despis'd, the right doing of it, so as to lay a sure Foundation of Christian Knowledge, not to be shaken by the manifold Adversaries of the Truth; and the doing this with that Plainness and Brevity that is needful for the vulgar Learners, may be call'd the Master-Piece of all Learning.

Therefore every Minister ought to do his utmost herein, and to do it every Sunday and Holy Day, as the 59th Canon and the Rubrick require.

In those Churches where there is Choice of Learned Men, it ought to be the Task of the most Learned.

Where there are two Sermons in a Day, this ought to be instead of one of them, rather than together with it, that it may be the better remembred. It would be very well done to restrain the Number of Sermons, to make way for a more necessary Duty. They do but little more than Water pour'd into a Sieve, and encourage the Error of those who place all Religion in hearing Sermons.

Here the Judgment of Bishop *Sanderson* deserves to be consider'd: In his Life written by Mr. *Walton*, is related how, in the Times of Confusion, he told Mr. *Walton*, ' That the way to restore this Nation to a more meek and Christian Temper, was to have the Body of Divinity (or so much of it as was needful to be known) to be put into 52 Homilies, or Sermons, of such a Length, as not to exceed a third or fourth Part of an Hours reading: And these needful Points to be made so clear and plain, that those of a mean Capacity might know what was necessary to be believed, and what God requires to be done; and then

some

* some Applications of Trial and Conviction : And these to
 * be read every Sunday of the Year, as infallibly as the
 * Blood circulates in the Body ; and then as certainly begun
 * again, and continued the Year following.

And what Sermons ought to be preach'd by those that
 diligently teach the Catechism, we are very truly told by the
 Injunctions of King *Charles* the Second. In one of them he
 requires ' All Ministers and Preachers in their several Cures,
 * not only diligently to apply themselves to Catechize the
 * younger Sort, according as in the Book of Common Prayer
 * is appointed, but also in their ordinary Sermons to insist
 * chiefly upon Catechetical Doctrines, - - - declaring withal
 * unto their Congregations, what Influence such Doctrines
 * ought to have into their Lives and Conversations, &c.
 * And where there is an Afternoons Exercise, that it be
 * especially spent either in explaining some Part of the
 * Church Catechism, or in preaching upon some such Text
 * of Scripture as will properly and naturally lead to the
 * handling of something contained in it, or may conduce
 * to the Exposition of the Liturgy and Prayers of the
 * Church (as Occasion shall be offer'd) the only Cause why
 * they grew into Contempt amongst the People, being this
 * that they were not understood.

Altho' the same Injunctions were afterwards given by
 King *James*, yet nothing could be better for the Advance-
 ment of the true Protestant Religion.

It is said of the wise and learned Protestant King *James*
 the First, that when Complaint was made to him of the
 Growth of Popery, he returned Answer, *That all this was*
for want of Catechizing. And the same, with the same
 Reason, may be said of the Growth of all Schism. For
 what makes any one subject to Errour, but the want of
 knowing the Truth ? And what makes any liable to be
 seduced from the Truth, but the want of being well
 grounded in it ? And I cannot but think, that those Dis-
 guised Popish Seducers, that are the great Promoters of
 all our Schisms, to weaken us by Division, do likewise
 promote our Contempt of Catechizing. For nothing in the
 World does so much expose us to their Delusions.

The same King *James* the First, in his Letter of Direc-
 tions to the Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in the Year 1620
 orders, ' That those Preachers be most encouraged and
 * approved of, who spend their Afternoons Exercise in the
 * Examination of Children in their Catechism, and in the

* Expounding

Expounding of the several Points and Heads of the Catechism; which is the most ancient and laudable Custom of Teaching in the Church of *England*.

And the Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in his Letter hereupon, written to the Lord Archbishop of *York*, says, So far are these Directions from abating, that his Majesty doth expect at our Hands, that it should increase the Number of Sermons, by renewing upon every Sunday in the Afternoon, in all Parish Churches throughout the Kingdom, that Primitive and most profitable Exposition of the Catechism, wherewith the People, yea, the very Children, may be timely seasoned and instructed in all the Heads of Christian Religion. The which kind of Teaching (to our Amendment be it spoken) is more diligently observ'd in all the Churches of *Europe*, than of late it hath been here in *England*. I find his Majesty much moved with this Neglect, and resolved (if we that are his Bishops do not see a Reformation hereof, which I trust we shall) to recommend it to the Care of the Civil Magistrate.

And in a Sermon preach'd before the same King *James*. in the Year 1624. by *James Usher* Archbishop of *Armagh*, are these Words, 'Your Majesty can never be sufficiently commended, in taking Order, that the chief Heads of the Catechism should, in the ordinary Ministry, be diligently Propounded and Explained unto the People throughout the Land: Which I wish were as duly executed every where, as it was piously by you intended: - - - The neglecting of this, is the frustrating of the whole Work of the Ministry. For let us preach never so many Sermons unto the People, our Labour is but lost, so long as the Foundation is unlaid, and the first Principles untaught, upon which all other Doctrine must be builded.

The Neglect therefore of Catechizing and Expounding the Catechism in any Parish Church whatsoever, is altogether inexcusable. There can be no Reason (whatever Pretence there is) to justify it. And in other Churches, what can be better for the one Part of the Day, than the constant Expounding the Catechism, or the whole Body of Divinity in Order? Where many preach by Turns, every one may have his Part assign'd him.

And for this Exercise the Morning is the fittest Part of the Day. Because this is more Necessary and more Profitable to all, requires more Learning and Diligence in the Minister

Minister, to do it as it ought to be done, and more Attention and Care in the Hearer, to understand it duly and without Mistake, than any ordinary Preaching. Witness the innumerable Errours in Religion, and the many different Opinions among the best and the most learned of the True Church. Can either Teacher or Learner go safely through all these, without the most serious, and the most painful Diligence?

And the more Diligence is requir'd, because this Exercise is not to be done by troubling the People with the Confutations of Errours and different Opinions, but by laying the Truth before them so plainly, and with such satisfactory Proof, as that they shall be well arm'd against any Errour, whensoever they shall be tempted to it.

But this great important Duty, so necessary to be done by Ministers every Lords Day, and other Holy Days, as is now shew'd, is also extreamly necessary to be done by them even every Day; and that not only by reading or talking to the Learners, but by making them answer all necessary Questions, and say and repeat Lessons, and go over them again and again, with long Patience, until they are perfectly settled in their Memories. The Truth of this is very easie to be found among great Numbers of both Young and Old, that cannot otherwise be instructed, nor have any to teach them besides their Minister.

If you only talk or read to them, altho' it be daily yet what you do is much like what our Saviour, *John* III. 8. says of the Wind, *They hear the Sound thereof*, but can tell little more of it.

And if you diligently instruct them the most effectual Way, and that every Day, yet it is not a few Weeks or Months that will make them tolerably fit for Confirmation and the Holy Communion.

This Dulness is not only in those we call Dunces but in the generality of those who have not their Understandings and Memories improv'd by Education at School, or have learn'd no more than to read and write.

But that which is most to be consider'd, is, That a Knowledge of Spiritual Things, as well plainer † as harder

† *Isa.* XLIV. 17, to 21.

is a Special Gift of God. *They are Spiritually discern'd,*
Cor. II. 14. And they who are minded either to learn,
or to teach them effectually, must be willing to imploy
Diligence and Time suitable to the Worthiness of them.

If the Apostles and their Assistants were not long in
the first Instructions of their Converts, they had that
miraculous Assistance which is not now to be hoped for.
And we having Christianity planted and settled among
us, and the Means of learning it from our Infancy,
and of bringing up our Children therein, as Children
are taught and learn it by slow Degrees, and in long
Time: So they who have neglected the Opportunity of
early Instruction, either for themselves, or those that be-
long to them, have no Reason to hope that a late Learn-
ing or Teaching shall be speedily compleated as it ought
to be. And accordingly it comes to pass, that elder ig-
norant Persons must be taught like Children, altho' they
have no want of Understanding and Memory in Worldly
Matters.

If Ministers therefore would bestow about a Quarter
of an Hour, at convenient Time, once a Day, or oftner,
in teaching those that are willing to learn, after such a
manner as is directed in the Beginning of the foregoing
Chapter, they may do a hundred times more Good than
they can do by their Sermons.

And if these Things be true, (and they that will may
find them so) there is no want of cogent Reason for
this daily Catechizing even by Ministers. The Advance-
ment of the Glory of God thereby, of the Heavenly
Honour of the Church, of the Eternal Salvation of Souls,
and the great Reward which they shall receive, that
will so serve Christ, * should make a Christian Minister
give up himself with all Chearfulness and Diligence to
so Blessed a Work.

* *Den. XII. 3.*

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

*The Duty of Godfathers and Godmothers in Instruction,
Of the Means of bringing all to do their Duty
therein.*

THE Duty of Godfathers and Godmothers is plainly enough told them in the Words of the Church, 'Ye must remember that it is your Parts and Duties to see that this Infant be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn Vow, Promise and Profession he hath here made by you. And that he may know these Things the better, ye shall call upon him to hear Sermons, and chiefly ye shall provide that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the Vulgar Tongue, and all other Things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Souls Health; and that this Child may be Vertuously brought up to lead a Godly and a Christian Life.

Altho' they cannot do this as the Parents and Masters may, yet they may and ought, *First*, to undertake for none, when they are past reasonable Hope of Life to perform what they undertake. *Secondly*, To undertake only for such, as they have reasonable Hope of Opportunity to see taught and brought up to a Christian Life: And, *Thirdly*, To call upon the Parents and others that neglect their Duties, and to give them all the Assistance they can.

Ministers also are Godfathers to all their Parishioners, not only to teach and exhort them in the Church, but also as they can, in every Place, *Acts* V. 42. *Ch.* XX. 20. and to endeavour to bring all others to do their Parts in teaching, and bringing to a Christian Life those that belong to them.

But who can tell how to perswade both Ministers and others that call themselves Christians, to do their indispensable Duties of Teaching, or seeing taught those that belong to them, all Things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Souls Health; and of doing their

Chap. 8. *Of bringing all to their Duty.* 63

their best Endeavour to bring them to lead a Godly and a Christian Life?

May God direct the Higher Powers to make effectual Laws, and prosper the same. May God so direct and prosper our Wise and Good KING, our Parliament and Convocation, as that every ones Interest, both of Teacher and Learner, may be made inseparable from his Duty, whether of Teaching, or Learning, or Living, as a True Christian ought.

One good Means of bringing young People to learn, may be read in Mr. Hales's Letters from the Synod of Dort, pag. 11. There is an Account of an *Helvetick Law*, That all young Persons that design'd to marry, were to repair both He and She to their Minister, a little before they design'd to marry, and by him to be examin'd how well they had learn'd their Catechism. If they had not done it perfectly to his Mind, he was to defer their Marriage till they had duly learn'd it.

This is no more than what the chief End of Marriage declar'd in the Common-Prayer-Book requires.* And for that End besides other, † *One of the True Church ought not to be married to a Dissenter*; because that is to bring his or her Children into apparent Danger of being brought up in a wrong Way; especially if the Children are left to the surviving Dissenter before they be brought up.

But the good Laws already made for Regular Marriages, have lost their Power, by the not observing the 62d and 102d Canons, which strictly require all to be married in the Churches or Chapels where the Parties or one of them dwell. So that whatever unlawful or unhappy Marriage the Parties are resolv'd upon, they will obtain it even by a License; and neither Parents, nor any other, can hinder it. For vile Lucre's sake, even by Licenses, so Parents can be secure of their Children.

I have now shew'd what is the Honour due to Confirmation, in preparing Souls for it by Instruction.

* See Mal. II. XV.

† 1 Kings XI. 2. 4.

2 Cor. VI. 14.

C H A P. IX.

The Honour due to Confirmation in presenting to the Bishop those that are prepar'd for it. None to be admitted to the Communion that refuse to be Confirm'd.

BOTH Young and Old are brought and come to Holy Duties, without considering how they are prepar'd for them. And so Children are brought up to say Prayers rudely, without praying. They are brought to Confirmation, without knowing so much as to make an Answer of two Syllables. Even they that answer for Children at their Baptism, know not to make their shorth Answers. And People come to the Holy Communion knowing little or nothing more than they see.

That better Regard may be had to Holy Confirmation God grant that what follows may be duly consider'd.

At the Baptism of every Child, the Minister gives the Charge to the Godfathers and Godmothers, and with them surely to the Parents, and also the Masters and Schoolmasters. 'Ye are to take Care that this Child
' be brought to the Bishop to be Confirm'd by him,
' soon as he can say the Creed, the Lords Prayer, and
' the Ten Commandments in the Vulgar Tongue, and
' be further instructed in the Church Catechism set forth
' for that Purpose.

This must suppose, as is before shew'd, Chap. II. ' That
' they have a competent Understanding of the Catechism
' and Live according to it; and also understand what
' Confirmation is, and how to joyn with the Bishop
' it with Understanding and Devotion.

It must suppose also ' Such Preparation at the Time
' before they are Confirm'd, as the Dignity and Benefit
' of this Ordinance require." For which read Chap. III.

Therefore Parents and Masters, Godfathers and Godmothers, and Schoolmasters, are to see that those under their Charge be so prepar'd; and to bring or send them to their Minister in due Time, that he may see whether they be duly prepar'd. See Pag. 34.

Here all have great Need to take Care that they be not too easie. For that is the greatest Wrong they can do to the Souls they are charged with. For by so doing, they cause them to partake of Gods Ordinance unworthily, to the Loss of the great inestimable Benefit of it, and instead thereof to their hurt.

When they are found duly prepar'd, the Rubrick orders that every one shall have a Godfather or a Godmother, as a Witness of their Confirmation. And the 29th Canon requires that He or She be one that hath received the Holy Communion.

The Rubrick also orders, ' That whensoever the Bishop shall give Knowledge for Children to be brought unto him for their Confirmation, the Curate of every Parish shall either bring or send in Writing, with his Hand subscribed thereunto, the Names of all such Persons within his Parish, as he shall think fit to be presented to the Bishop to be Confirmed.

To the end that none may neglect this Duty, the Rubrick at the end of the Order of Confirmation, requires That none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be Confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.

This is the Duty of all Ministers, how much soever it be neglected; that they may not suffer Gods Ordinance to be despis'd, nor the great Benefit of it to be lost. Besides, they have solemnly vow'd at their Ordination, ' To give their faithful Diligence always so to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and Realm hath received the same, according to the Commandments of God, so that they may teach the People committed to their Care and Charge, with all Diligence to keep and observe the same.

They have also openly in the Church declared ' Their unfeigned Assent and Consent to all and every thing contained and prescribed in, and by the Book of Common-Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies, according to the use of the Church of *England*.

Therefore if any of their Parishioners think Confirmation not necessary, or not ordain'd of God, they may not take that for an Excuse.

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If it were not ordain'd of God, it would yet be a pious good Thing, as no sober Protestant can deny. And therefore any that think it not commanded of God, need not doubt of the Benefit of their devout praying with the Prayers of the Church offer'd by the Bishop, for the Graces of the Holy Spirit. And also they need not doubt of Gods Blessing upon their keeping Unity with the Church, and dutiful Obedience to the good Laws of it. *Eph. VI. 1, 2, 3.*

C H A P. X.

The Honour due to Confirmation from those that administer it. The great necessity and benefit of personal Visitations, as in the Primitive Church.

GOD grant that the Honour due from them may be duly consider'd, That those *Stewards whom their Lord hath made Rulers over his Household, to give them their Portion of Meat in due Season, may so do, as faithful and wise Stewards:* And that they may so rule the Lord's Household, as that all, through his Grace, may be ready in due time to receive their Portion: That the Means whereby it is dispens'd and receiv'd, may be so reverently and orderly done, as becomes the Dignity of God's Holy Ordinance, and the Divine Majesty of his holy Spirit, whose Grace is in a bounteous Measure communicated thereby, if rightly done.

For these blessed Ends, the way of visiting by the Bishops of the Primitive Apostolick Church, is surely the best.

The Council of *Toledo*, in the Year 633. Ch. 35. says, 'Episcopum per cunctas Dioeceses Parochiasque suas, per singulos annos ire oportet; a Bishop ought to go through all his Dioeceses and Parishes every Year.'

By so doing he may see, or by some Means find what is now purposely conceal'd from him, even under the Cloke of an Oath (and should he be so put off in what so much concerns the Glory of God, and the Salvation of great Flocks of Souls! he may see how both his Clergy, and the rest of the People committed to his Charge, do their Duty, particularly in Catechizing, and Preparation for Confirmation. He may have sufficient Opportunity, which now he cannot

Chap. 10 of Personal Yearly Visitations. 67

cannot have, to examine those that are brought to him; and so inform himself how they live according to the Catechism. He may also do that which now seems impracticable, that is take effectual Care for due Decency and Order. By these Means, instead of scarce any coming to God's Ordinance as they ought, all that can be done may be done for its being rightly receiv'd by all.

Other great Advantages there are of this personal visiting every Parish. They that through Sickness, or other Weakness cannot travel, will not lose the Opportunity. And by yearly visiting, and where need requires oftner, all will have this great Means of their Souls Food in due Season, as Christ requires. What can be more unkind, than for a Spiritual Father to let any one of his dutiful Children stay long without it, any longer than absolute Necessity requires?

Another great Benefit there is of frequent personal visiting, little thought of. They who by Sickness are confin'd to their Beds or Houses, may have the sure Means of receiving the Holy Ghost the Comforter, in their greatest need of him. But this was so thought of in the ancient Church, as that when in danger of death a Bishop was too far off, St. Jerom and many others would have his absence supply'd by an inferiour Minister: as in the like Necessity they would have Baptism administred by a Lay-man. Jesus Christ went not only to the Synagogues, but to private Houses, when there was occasion: and so did his Holy Apostles.

He went about all the Cities and Villages, teaching in their Synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, Matth. IX. 35. He did so, altho' he was so far from having those Conveniences for travelling which his Successors on Earth now have, that he went on foot. When he sent forth his Disciples, he sent them before his Face into every City and Place, whither he himself would come, Luke X. 1. and what can be more for the Honour of his Stewards, who have no need of his wearisome way of travel, John IV. 6. than to follow the blessed Example of our great Lord. He never stood upon Punctilio's. To shew how far he was from that, he wash'd his Disciples Feet, and that in such a manner, as if he were their real Servant. May any of his Servants then think any thing too much to do for the Souls that are

his Members! When he has said, *I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done. Verily I say unto you, The Servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent is greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them,* John XIII. 15, 16, 17.

Here is worthy to be consider'd what Bishop *Beveridge* says in his Preface to his Exposition of the Catechism. After having given good Advice for the necessary duty of Catechizing, and for enforcing all to do their Parts, he adds these Words, ' Nothing would then be wanting to complete the Work, but that every Bishop go through his whole Diocese, as the Law requires, at least once in every three Years, to see how it hath been done, and to Confirm those who have been thereby fitted and prepared for it. Without which all will come to nothing. For unless a Bishop doth his Duty, or in Case of Necessity procure it to be done by another, both his Clergy and the People will be apt to neglect theirs; and the Fault will in great Measure lie at his Door. Which therefore cannot be suppos'd of any who are sensible of the strict Account they must give at the last Day of all their Actions, and especially of this, wherein the Glory of God, the Good of the Church, the Salvation of the Souls committed to their Care, and by Consequence their own, is so highly concerned.

He says at least once in every Three Years. But for the Reasons aforesaid, he might very well have said every Year, and also oftner where Need requires.

He says also, ' Unless a Bishop doth his Duty, or in Case of Necessity, procure it to be done by another.' But why should not this be done in a whole Diocese, as well as in any Parish?

For whatever a Bishop through any just Necessity cannot do, why may not one of his Cathedral be consecrated for a Suffragan, or more, if the Largeness of the Diocese require it, and undertake so Blessed a Work with the Revenues they already have, and therefore be consecrated and admitted without Fees? As it would certainly be most for the Good and Honour of the Church to have all the Ministers of Christ whatsoever, both ordained and placed in their several Stations, as freely as they were by Christ and his Apostles.

And I cannot but pray, and I hope many will pray with me, That in all His Majesty's Dominions, and

All Places of the World, where any of the Church of England dwells, there may be of the Episcopal Order, those that shall be disintangled, Resident, and ready, as often as Need requires, to Confirm in due Season; that so far as is possible, none prepared for it may dye without it; and to do whatsoever else is needful to be done by them.

Where Maintenance suitable to their Dignity cannot be had, they may be as well as they can, as they were in the Days of the Apostles; until their Flocks can be made sensible of the Command of Christ, *To render unto God the Things that are Gods*; and how their doing so is for the great Good both of their Souls, *Gal. VI. 6, to 10*, and also of their Bodies, *Prov. III. 9, 10. Mal. III. 8, to 13*.

Sufficient has been now said, for the Personal and Yearly Visitations of the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Fathers. And God grant that all may acknowledge the same. And may those Fathers duly consider the Benefit to the Church of such Visitations; and also what Reason there is for performing them with the Resolution of *St. Paul*, in the Regions of *Achaia*, *2 Cor. XI. 9*.

May they also consider what Reason there is,

1. For their giving not short Warning, nor a few Days Warning of the Day; and why not a full Month? that there may be Time enough for a deliberate doing all that is to be done by the Minister; that none through Business or Absence may lose the Opportunity; and that all may be duly prepar'd.

2. For their admitting none to Confirmation without a satisfactory Account from their Minister. 1. Of their understanding the Catechism, and Living according to it. 2. Of their having perform'd the Work of Repentance, and their believing the Promises both of Baptism and Confirmation. And, 3. Of their understanding and duly considering the Vow, and the Prayers of Confirmation, that they may devoutly make their Vow, and joyn in the Prayers.

3. For the Bishop himself to examine carefully some of them.

4. For the strict observing the Orders appointed by the Church, for every one to have a convenient Witness for their being placed in Order, and for every one to an-

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swer audibly to the Demand of the Bishop, and that in Order one after another.

5. If there be a great Number, to divide them into Companies, and the Bishop to make the Demand severally to each Company, by their Minister Reverently brought before him, and again to their Places; and when he lays his Hands upon them, for the Ministers to bring them again before him, and to their Places, without suffering any to thrust themselves.

6. For taking Care that all be present within Hearing the whole Time; and if they be too many, dividing them for another Part of the Day, or rather for another Morning.

7. For taking effectual Care, with the Help of the Churchwardens, that the whole Congregation be in their proper Places, with quiet and decent Behaviour.

Whatever is the Custom, too much Care cannot be taken, nor may any Care be thought a Trouble, for the Right and Reverend Administration, and Receiving of this Holy Ordinance: That therein due Honour may be paid to God, and to his Holy Spirit: That we may shew our selves duly thankful for the inestimable Grace that is offer'd to us; And that it may be obtain'd and fully obtain'd to every one.

And surely all that is here said of the Honour due to this Blessed Ordinance from the Reverend Fathers of the Church, is for their Honour, for their High and Everlasting Honour, infinitely above any worldly Honour whatsoever. And nothing would more secure their Dignity against the Attempts of all their Enemies.

¶ **O** Then that *the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood*, may see that happy Day, when those Reverend Fathers shall, for *the Love of God*, who so lov'd us as to *lay down his Life for us*, and for the Love of innumerable immortal Souls Redeemed by His most Precious Blood, apply themselves unanimously and vigorously to the Blessed Work, so Honourable also to them, and effectually to engage all their Clergy to do their Parts, for the Restoring and advancing of his True Religion. *Amen.*

But in pleading for the Episcopal Dignity, I am far from any Inclination to favour the Persecution of Dissenting

Chap. II. *What is to be done to Ideots, &c.* 71

senting Consciences. For the Wisdom that is from above, is peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated, full of mercy, Jam. III. 17. And the Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient in Meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth. 2 Tim. II. 24, 25.

The right Way then to bring over our Dissenting Brethren to the Church, is to let them see us live up to our Holy Profession, and Charitably do to them, as we would be done unto.

C H A P. XI.

What is to be done to Ideots, and to those who are dull through Neglect.

IDEOTS have Souls which were bought with Christs precious Blood, as dearly as the Souls of the wisest. Therefore it is an inexcusable Wickedness to neglect the meanest Christian. And *Matth. XVIII. 10*, our Blessed Lord and Saviour says, *Take heed that ye despise not one of those little ones; for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven.*

They therefore whom God has made incapable of understanding the Catechism, be their Incapacity more or less, they may, and must be carefully taught so much both of Knowledge and Practice, as they are capable of learning and in Words and Expressions agreeable to their Capacity. The most simple Ideots may be taught something of God and their Duty,

And they that learn and do so far as God has enabled them, may surely be Confirm'd, altho' they cannot be capable of partaking of the Holy Communion. And the Bishop, instead of the Question appointed, may ask them a short Question agreeable to their Capacity.

They that were born both Dumb and Deaf, may have and shew some Sense of God and Duty, and may be shew'd to kneel before the Bishop. And without doubt he may give them the Blessing:

For God surely requires of no Body any more than he gives. And he has given his Son to die for every one without Exception.

But they that through Neglect or Sloth are dull, and unapt to learn Christian Knowledge, may not be indulg'd. If in ripe Years they can learn no faster than Children, what they should have learn'd in their Childhood, they must be willing to learn and be taught as Children. For our Saviour says, *Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little Child, he shall not enter therein.* Mark X. 15. They may not think to be sav'd by proud despising what Children are taught. For the Catechism is the Chief of all Christian Knowledge, and the very Marrow of the Bible. They must therefore learn it as they can, with Diligence and Patience, until they have learn'd all Things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Souls Health. And when they have so done, they must with the same Diligence continue learning as long as they live; both to keep what they have, and to grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. III. 18.

C H A P. XII.

The great Inconveniencies of the Neglect of Confirmation.

The great Benefits of the due Observation of it. An Exhortation to Prayer.

TO move all, both those that Administer Confirmation, and those that are to be Confirm'd, and those that ought to prepare Souls for it, to pay that Honour which is due to so Holy and Blessed an Ordinance, it highly concerns them to consider the great Inconveniencies of the Neglect of it, and the inestimable Benefit of duly honouring it.

The Inconveniencies of the Neglect, or negligent Performance of Confirmation, and of due Preparation for it by Catechizing, &c. are these.

1. The Generality of People are drown'd in a Deluge of Ignorance, notwithstanding all our preaching; which without diligent Catechizing, serves to little Purpose, but to keep the

the Hearers ever learning, and never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth.

2. All Religion is turn'd into a meer slight Complement, and Prayer into a formal Prating, whether it be understood or not. And this Prating is countenanced by a no less evil Custom of hasty reading the publick Prayers. Those Prayers are also lightly esteem'd. And the great Privilege of the Highest to offer unto God the Prayers of the People, is counted a mean Employment for inferiour Priests.

3. * *The scant Measure that is abominable*, is generally the best Measure in all the Worship and Service of God, and all Things belonging thereto. And the † Lukewarmness that Christ abhors, is likewise the best Temper.

4. Heresie, Schism, and Atheism, abound exceedingly.

5. Many horrid Crimes pass for ignorant Things. Our Entrance into Christianity is with the Sureties solemn taking Gods Name in vain, or their equivocating Silence. Any Sureties are thought sufficient in so weighty a Matter, altho' they have no reasonable Hope, either of Opportunity or of Life to perform their Vow.

Baptism is made by many in the Plantations an indifferent Thing; and till of late has been generally denied to their Slaves. Confirmation has hitherto been a rude Disorder: And few have come to it with so much Preparation as to know how to make so short an Answer to the solemn Demand of the Bishop. The Lords Supper is for the most part either neglected, or receiv'd in Ignorance. And both good and bad are admitted, notwithstanding 1 Cor. V. 11, Canon 26, and the Rubrick. St. Pauls Prohibition plainly shews, that whether Judas was admitted or not, we may not admit known Sinners without Repentance. A vile Order is thought good enough for Churches, or any thing belonging to them, such as the Parishioners will not endure in their own Houses. And so they honour themselves far above their Maker, who gave them all they have. Any Pretence is thought sufficient for absenting from Church, or coming late, or departing before the End. Any of these is allow'd to a Servant, for the meer Worship of his Master or Mistress. Every where the former Part of

Gods Service, is always disturb'd by late comers. Even therein a great Temptation to Adultery in the Heart is counted a laudable Fashion. The Lords Day is made a Day of worldly Business, upon Pretence of Christian Liberty. And so Christian Liberty to serve and enjoy God, to gather the true Riches, to feast our Souls, and to give our Bodies necessary and convenient Rest, is chang'd for Egyptian Drudgery. Days appointed for the solemn Worship of God, and solemnly bidden in the Church, are solemnly forbidden in the Market, even the Day of Gods laying down his Life for us, and of his Ascension to the Kingdom of Heaven. Who scruples at Feasting on the Fasting Days, appointed by the Church? Diverse kinds of Sacrilege and Simony are justified by their several Pretences. Churches are even exposed to publick Sale. What is the taking or withholding from God all, or almost all the substantial Part of what was Consecrated to the Maintenance of his Worship; and leaving the small Things for his Honour, and Poverty and Beggery for his Ministers*! And how little better are Sine-Cures, and Non-Residence? Solemn Oaths of Parish Officers and others are made meer Matters of Form. And this with Presentments of Nothing, the other meer Matters of Form, is the Reformation of Manners by both Spiritual and Temporal Courts. Impracticable Oaths are given and taken, Oaths are solemnly given and taken, without the Taker either knowing before hand what he is to swear, or understanding it when he swears, or necessary Care of remembring it. Solemn Oaths are also debased to Trifles of Lucre, without the Occasions of Justice. Even the Learned have Need to consider what Oaths they require, and how they are, or may be performed, particularly how impracticable is the Truth of Nine Depositions, or any of them, *De certa Scientia praesentandum aptum esse & idoneum moribus & scientia*. They have also Need to consider what is done once a Year in Gods House. Is it not in their Power to abrogate or moderate such Things?

These and the like are even the Consequences of the Neglect of Confirmation, or slight receiving it. Because that is the Neglect of the peculiar Means of Grace, to enable us to understand and remember, and live up to the Duty of the Gospel. † And because by the Neglect of Catechizing, as

* See Mal. III. 8, to I.

† See Part I. Ch. IV. and VI.

Ch. 12. *Benefits of Honouring, Confirmation.* 75

well the Clergy as the People, do either not understand, or not think of their Duty as they ought.

But if Confirmation were duly and decently perform'd with due Preparation, then all those Inconveniencies would, as far as can be expected in this World, be remov'd, by the Grace of God given in this Ordinance, to know, and remember, and to do, as becomes the Honour of Christianity; and by the natural Effects of the Clergy carefully expounding, and the People diligently learning the full Sense of the Catechism, and of every one having made a serious, and well consider'd; and solemn Vow, To renounce the Devil and all his Works, the vain Pomp and Glory of the World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh; To believe stedfastly all the Articles of the Christian Faith; and to keep obediently Gods Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of his Life.

This would be the way of advancing the Glory of the Church, and of preserving the Unity of it.

Then by receiving *the Holy Ghost the Comforter*, Christians would find the Angelical Pleasures of true Christianity; they would be made rich with heavenly Treasure; and be highly honour'd by God, and all his holy Angels.

Then would all Orders and Conditions of Men be happy in one another, Christ's Church would have lively Members: the King would have truly loyal Subjects: Parents would have dutiful Children; Masters faithful Servants. And all by *patient continuance in well doing*, would both seek for, and find *Glory and Honour, and Immortality*.

But to bring such things to pass is the marvellous Work of God alone.

Therefore may all, with earnest endeavour to do their several Parts, devoutly pray. That God would with his Favour behold our most gracious Sovereign Lord King GEORGE, and all the Royal Family; and so replenish them with the Grace of his holy Spirit, that they may always incline to his Will, and walk in his Way: and endue them plentifully with heavenly Gifts: That he would be pleased to direct and prosper all the Consultations of the High Court of Parliament, and of the Venerable Convocation, to the Advancement of his Glory: And that he would send down upon our Bishops and Curates, and all Congregations committed to their Charge, the

the healthful Spirit of his Grace; and that they may truly please him, pour upon them the continual Dew of his Blessing: That in his infinite Mercy he would vouchsafe to grant this for the Honour of our Advocate and Mediator Jesus Christ: to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory for ever and ever: *Amen.*



FINIS.



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THE END.





ERRATA

Are many, but if the Reader will take Notice of these, I hope he will find Satisfaction.

PAge 19, line 31, read Matth. X. 8. l. 33. r. Luke X. 9, 17.
In the Margin, for Discipline, r. Discipleship. For Ch. 15, 16, 17, r. Ch. I. 15, 16, 17. p. 20, to the mark †, put in the marg. See Part I. Ch. I. In the marg. r. Joh. I. 31. for Apostles r. Apollos. p. 22, r. of the Resurrection of the Flesh: p. 24. for nefas, r. nescis. p. 25, r. Holy Ghost *, whom we affirm to be given in true Baptism †: understand. p. 32. r. Acts VIII. p. 35, r. Acts IV. 32. John XVI. 7. p. 37, r. Eccles. V. 1. for be given, r. begin. for compleat r. competent. p. 38. for compleat r. competent. p. 40. r. Matth. V. 23, to 27. p. 41. r. Matth. VI. 18. p. 42, for visiteth, r. resisteth. p. 44. r. and I do confess. and withal humble. p. 46. r. Ch. XIV. 15, 16, 26. p. 47, in the marg. r. See Part I. Ch. 9. p. 51. for Institution, r. Instruction. p. 54. r. by all which, and by the going out of Waggon even on Sunday Evening, very great Prophanation is caus'd. p. 62. r. health; and to do their. p. 64. r. See pages 42, 43. p. 67. r. and to inform. by a Layman *. * See pag. 24, &c. p. 73, r. the highest Bishop. p. 75. r. Treasure; and they would be.

Every considerate Review adds to the imperfect Perfection of all Writings of Men: Therefore these Additions are here set, after the Correction of the Slips of the Press.

Page 12 and 15, after, and were Baptized, *add*, that did truly love God and keep his Commandments.

Page 14, at the End of Part I. Chap. V. *add*, The same is to be said of those that come to this Holy Ordinance without necessary Knowledge; altho' they come with a good Meaning.

Page 32, After Calvin says, *read*, And in his Comment on *Acts VIII*, 17, he owns the Laying on of Hands there to be *Ceremoniam quæ Divinitus illis tradita erat*, a Ceremony which was appointed them of God. But he would have it not the same with that in *Heb. VI*.

After, how or when he ordain'd it, *add*, That neither the Holy Scripture, nor the Ancient Church (as is before shew'd †) make any Difference between the Laying on of Hands, *Acts VIII*, and *Heb. VI*. † Part I. Chap. I. Part II. Ch. III. and V.

Page 36, after, and are Baptiz'd, *add*, That truly love God and keep his Commandments.

Page 47, After *Our Father*, &c. *add*, And his Command to pray earnestly with the same Prayer for the Holy Spirit, *ver. 5. to 14.*

Page 48, After he laid his Hands upon him, *read*, Reason tells that the Right Hand must be meant, and that it only is meant in this Office. The Church orders the Bishop to lay his Hand upon the Head of every one severally, saying, Defend, O Lord, this thy Child, [*or this thy Servant,*] &c. And this can mean only the Right Hand, not the Right Hand upon one, and the Left upon another. If there be too many for the Bishops Strength, he may divide them, and order them to attend upon him as he pleases.

Page 69, after carefully some of them, *add*, And to do this before the beginning of the Service: And also before the beginning of the Service, to hear the Complaint of any that think their Minister refuses to present them without sufficient Cause.

Page 51. Set in the Margin to, continue his for ever *,
* John IV, 14. Ch. VII. 38.
to, more and more †,
† John XV, 2.

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